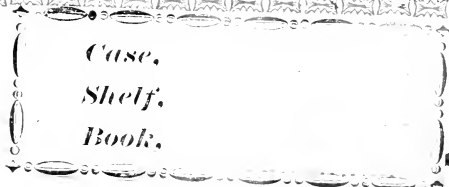
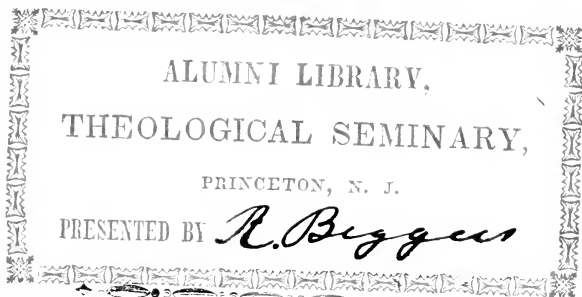


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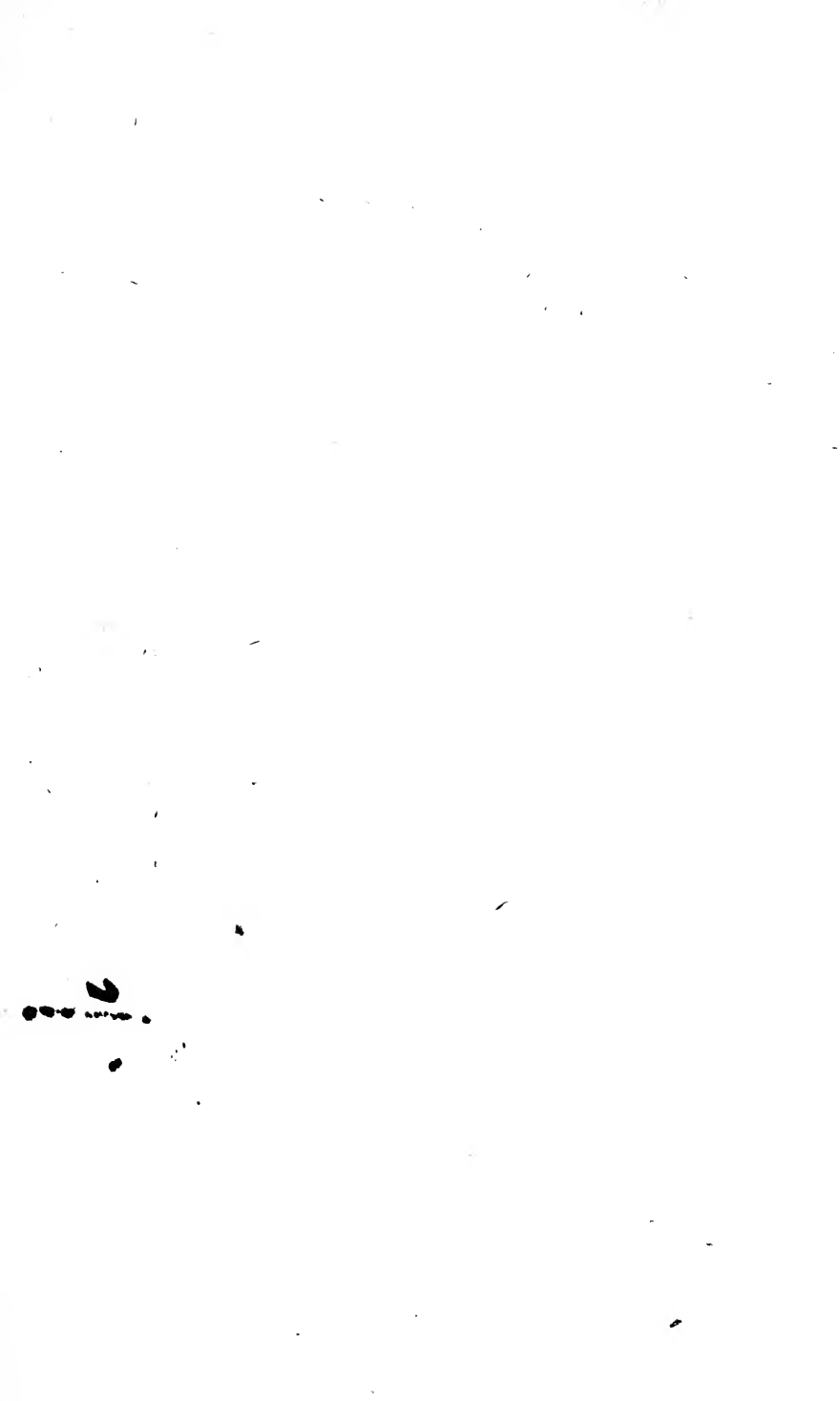


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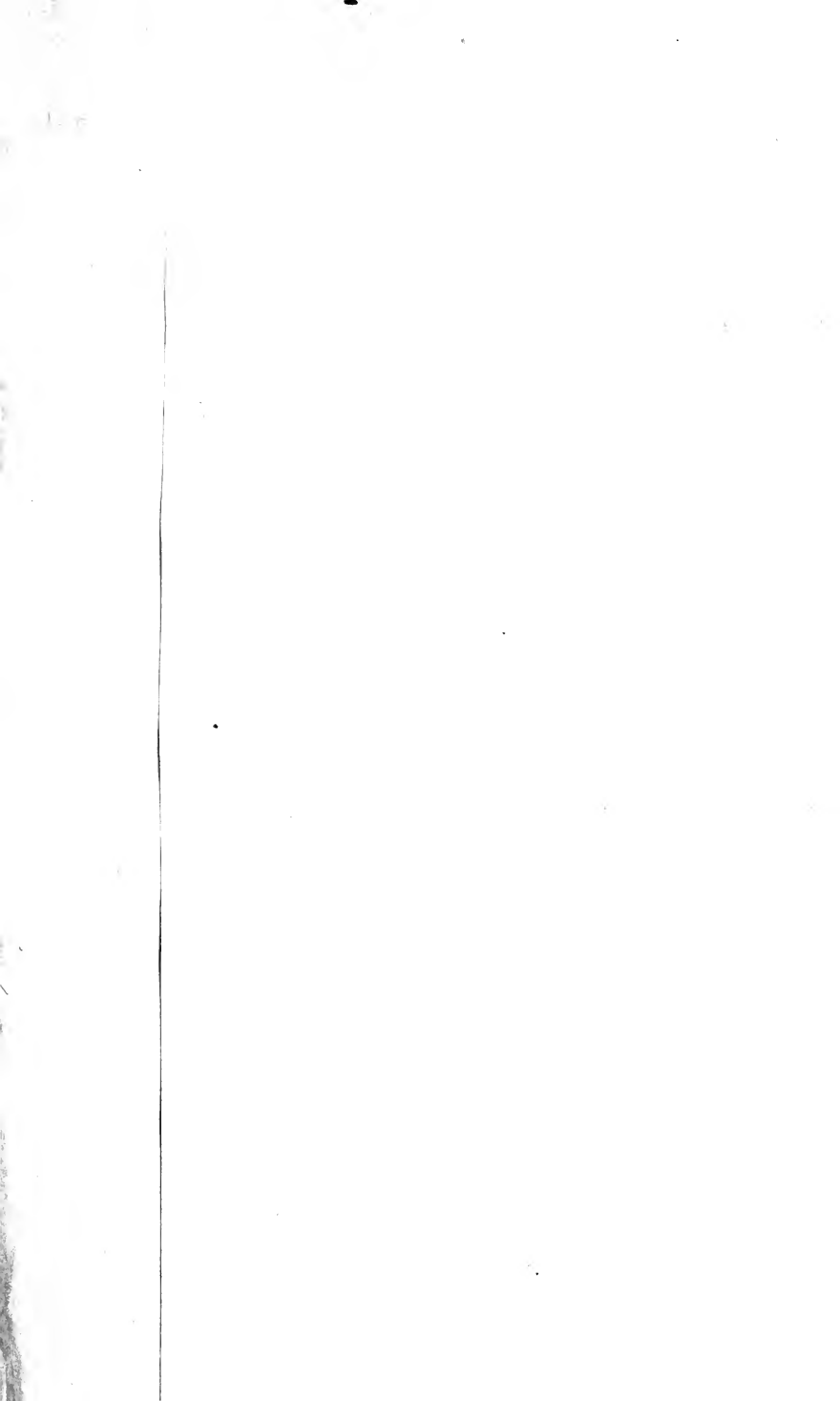
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Rob^t. Biggers

SERMONS

PREACHED

ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS.

BY THE

REV. WILLIAM GOODE, A.M.

RECTOR OF ST. ANDREW, WARDROBE, AND ST. ANN, BLACKFRIARS;

LECTURER OF ST. JOHN OF WAPPING, &c.

London:

PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR,

AND SOLD BY L. B. SEELEY, NO. 169, FLEET STREET.



GOODE'S
FUNERAL SERMON

ON THE DEATH OF

The Rev. W. ROMAINÉ, A. M.

[Price ONE SHILLING.]

Entered at Stationers' Hall.

Faith triumphant in Death ;

A

FUNERAL SERMON,

OCCASIONED BY THE DEATH OF

The Rev. W. ROMAINÉ, A. M.

RECTOR OF ST. ANDREW WARDROBE, AND ST. ANN'S,

BLACKFRIARS; AND

LECTURER OF ST. DUNSTAN'S IN THE WEST;

PREACHED IN

The Parish Church of St. Dunstan,

Sunday Evening, August 9th, 1795,

By the Rev. W. GOODE, A. M.

LATE CURATE TO MR. ROMAINÉ; AND

TUESDAY EVENING LECTURER OF ST. LAWRENCE JEWRY.

Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord.

L O N D O N :

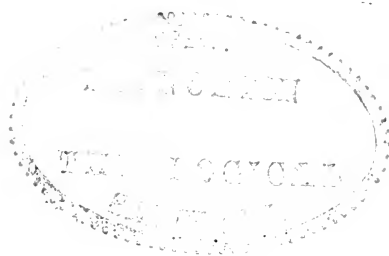
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1795.

*This Sermon is published at the particular request of the
family and friends of the deceased.*



A

S E R M O N, &c.

HEB. xi. 13.

THESE ALL DIED IN FAITH.

I HAVE lately been called, my dear friends, to some of the most afflicting and painful services that ever I was engaged in; of which the present is by no means the least.

To pay a last tribute of respect to a dear, departed, venerable, servant of God, to condole with you who loved him, and hung upon his words with rapture and delight, is indeed distressing to my feelings; but such a tribute I could by no means refuse to pay.

From my earliest infancy I have entertained a rising veneration for the character we now lament, a veneration which has ripened into respect and affec-

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tion

tion by a close connexion of near ten years, with the most uninterrupted cordiality and good understanding. And, though the necessary distance between youth and age, such great acquirements in knowledge and in grace and such inferior attainments in both, must have had an influence ; yet as I revered and loved him as a father, and served him as a friend, I have lamented his loss with the most painful sensibility as to myself, while I sympathize with the general sorrow that has impressed those who loved his person, and the cause in which he was so fervently engaged.

He is now no more below ! we cannot but weep, it is the language of nature, which grace does not command us to reject but to regulate ; a language sanctioned by the example of the Redeemer, who wept at the tomb of his friend.

A variety of motives led me to solicit the leave of this church, with which I have been kindly indulged ; especially as our dear minister for above forty-six years sustained in it the office of Lecturer.—The subject I have chosen, you well know, was the peculiar and delightful theme of his conversation, his preaching, and his writings ; exemplified in the whole of his life ; and, we can truly say, he died in the faith
of

of Jesus, and is now enjoying the end of his faith, even the salvation of his soul. While we thus see it exemplified, we know that he would, and we know that we must, ascribe all the glory to the power and riches of divine grace. And may God make the present consideration effectual to kindle in our breasts a desire after the “faith of God’s elect;” that we all may be followers of them who through faith and patience now inherit the promises.

In this chapter the apostle is setting before us the wonders that faith hath wrought; and, having illustrated it by the example of the antient patriarchs, in the works they performed through the faith of God, he follows them to their dying beds, and sees them exercising the same faith there. Retiring from the busy scenes in which they had been engaged with quietness and satisfaction, they rejoiced in the assured persuasion of the fulfilment of the promises to themselves and their posterity, and stood with joyful expectation of glory upon the borders of the eternal world. They lived in faith, and so rose above the difficulties and distresses of their pilgrimage; they now died in faith, rejoicing amidst their pains and languishings in the prospect that was beyond. Oh precious faith! that produces such admirable effects

in such a world as this; still it is the same, still has the same objects, the same security, the same prospects, and brings the same consolations and supports. Our dear departed father in Christ found the rich experience of this, and affords another striking instance, to the many gone before, of the glory and suitability of the gospel of Christ, the fulness of the promise, the all-sufficiency of the grace, the faithfulness of God, and the consolatory application of the Lord the Spirit.

But, as I fear I must detain your attention rather longer than usual, we will immediately enter upon the subject before us. And here we shall, *first*, speak a little of faith in general: *then* consider the peculiar advantages of faith in the hour of death: illustrate the whole in the life and death of our departed minister: and conclude with an address to different characters.—May the Spirit of Jesus, the author and finisher of the faith, seal the word with his divine influence, and make us all partakers of like precious faith with him.—We are

FIRST, To speak of faith in general.

This is one of those graces of which we find the most glorious and surprizing things said in the word of God; and those that understand its nature
and

and effects can easily perceive the reasons. It is the channel of all spiritual communication, it unites to Jesus as the principle of the spiritual life, all the actings of which are carried on, and the enjoyments consummated, by the faith of the SON OF GOD.

Faith simply considered is a giving credit to the TRUTH OF GOD, and its objects are whatever God hath revealed. There are two things which it respects in these; first, the TRUTH ITSELF upon the declaration of God, and then, the IMPORTANCE AND EXCELLENCY of that truth. The latter of these is equally a part of divine revelation as the former. And the distinction of a dead from a living faith, we apprehend, is this, that it is a persuasion of the *truth* without a correspondent discovery of its *suitableness and glory*.—A man may reason himself into a belief of the general system of the gospel, while he feels but little of its effects upon his heart; its external evidences, of miracles and prophecies, are so decisive as to demand assent to its declarations; but, while the heart of man is averse to spiritual enjoyments, there can be no discovery of its excellency, no relish of its blessings. For this there must be a “new heart and a right spirit created within us.” Hence, says the apostle, “The natural man receiveth not the things of the

Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned." 1 Cor. ii. 14. Faith is in this view altogether "the gift of God;" the effect of regenerating grace; the eye of the understanding that beholds the glories of divine truth, and brings its consolation and its energy into the heart. Oh what views now open to the humbled and enlightened mind, the contrite but believing heart, according to the power of Faith! views with which he was before unacquainted; views which enliven the hopes, and sanctify the soul.

The whole word of God, as such, is the object of faith. But it cannot be supposed that all its doctrines are of equal importance. For, though all have their influence in the Christian life and warfare, and the more clearly and extensively perceived, by the strongest faith, the more blessed the effects, yet there must be an acknowledged distinction. Some of them are absolutely necessary, others useful to the believer, others for his more abounding consolation and direction. And as our faith apprehends variously, and in different degrees, so there is a great variety, in Christian experience.

But saving faith must undoubtedly embrace all
those

those truths that are revealed as necessary for salvation. Happy is it that these are but few. The state of man as fallen, the way of reconciliation through the atoning blood of an Almighty Saviour, and the necessity of its application by the Spirit of Jesus, include all that a sinner needs to know for time or for eternity. To know myself as a sinner, to know Christ as the all-gracious and almighty Redeemer, to have the enjoyment of this by the Spirit's teaching in my heart, this is the knowledge that faith communicates, that sanctifies and that saves the soul. A confession of sin is indeed very common; but that view of it which humbles the sinner, and lays him low at the footstool of divine mercy, is no otherwise effected than by a believing application of the truth by the Spirit. Then sin appears in all its guilt and defilement, its demerit and condemnation, viewed in the light of God's eternal law: and the sinner cries, not with a formal exclamation, but from the bottom of his heart, God be merciful to *me* a sinner. Mercy is his plea, mercy is his hope, sovereign mercy the only remedy for human misery. Oh blessed Gospel! that here opens the animating prospect to the fainting spirit. Blessed Jesus! who stands so prominently forth on

every sacred page as the all-sufficient Saviour of returning sinners.—Here he lies and is at rest.

The divine person, the almighty power, the infinite glory, the deep humiliation, the bleeding cross, the atoning blood, the perfect and everlasting righteousness, the glorious intercession, of Jesus, the Lord our Redeemer, are discovered in the truth of God as the firm support and unchanging security of those that trust therein.—Faith believes the record, acknowledges the suitableness, flies to the refuge, relies upon the all-sufficiency, experiences the blessing; and adores the sovereign grace of the Father that devised, the infinite love of the Son that executed, the almighty power of the Spirit that enlightens and applies.—The conscience at peace, the heart at rest, realize all the glorious promises of the Gospel, while every power is sweetly drawn with the cords of love, and consecrated to the service of a reconciled God in Christ.—The Spirit of Jesus, enlightening the mind, “shines also into the heart, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ;” and, implanting that faith which beholds *him*, nourishes it from day to day by the means of his own appointment; and thus, in its daily exercise, glory is given to the Redeemer, and blessings received into the soul,

soul, in proportion to the power of faith. Weak faith brings weak consolation, strong faith brings strong consolation and effects into the heart and life. But that faith which leads to Jesus, and unites to him, secures the same privileges, though not the same present enjoyments, to every true believer. A God in Christ is a God of promise, a God keeping promise, and all the promises of the Gospel belong to such. Blessings, unnumbered blessings, are discovered in that rich storehouse of all blessings. Through the hope of these they overcome the world; like Moses "count the reproach of Christ greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt;" or, with the great apostle, "count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord."

The men of this world see through a false medium even things that are present and visible. Faith discovers all under the regulation of a God and Father in Christ Jesus, all directed by his wisdom for the advantage of his people: providences ordered, afflictions sanctified, crosses turned into blessings, trials into mercies, temptations driving nearer to Jesus, and "all things working together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

But

But beyond faith renders invisible things visible, penetrates the vail, discovers the King in his beauty, realizes what we hope for as actually existing, and "beholding the glory of the Lord changes into the same image from glory to glory, even by the Spirit of the Lord." Thus all the promises of the Gospel are received and trusted to, in Christ, to his glory, to our comfort, sanctification, and salvation.

Every act of faith implies a humble dependence upon God, a sense of our deficiency and emptiness, a looking to God to fulfil his declaration, and a patient expectation of it from the hand of the Redeemer. Nor is the exercise of Faith without its supply; it does receive grace for grace, grace for the time of need, and such a supply of consolation as the Lord, in his infinite wisdom, sees best. If, therefore, we could but trust the faithful promise of God, (the ground and encouragement of Faith) there is not a want but it discovers a full supply in the exalted Redeemer, nor a situation but there is grace not only for patience, but for thankfulness and joy. As the apostle beautifully expresses it, "My God shall supply all your need, according to his riches, in glory, by Christ Jesus." Faith without a promise is presumption: but, where I have the

promise of God, my faith may go to the whole extent of that promise, without danger of being mistaken or deceived. I may rejoice in the certain expectation of its accomplishment; and, though clouds and darkness surround his ways of providence or grace, I trust a faithful God, assured that light shall spring out of darkness, and the prayers of Faith be turned into the songs of Praise.

These are the peculiar views which you have so long heard—heard in such a superior manner—heard with such energy and unction, such dignity of elevation, such earnestness of persuasion, such sweetness of love. Our dear, departed, venerable, Minister had experienced the riches of the grace himself, and therefore could commend it to others. And he spake like one who felt what he delivered. He could say, and often did, with the apostle, “that which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, declare we unto you.” He knew much of the state of human nature, and the evil of sin as in the heart, and he learnt it, as he himself tells us*, “most by his own experience, and by many sore and daily conflicts in his own soul.” This had so endeared to him the

* Funeral Sermon for Mr. Jones.

precious Saviour of sinners, that, nearest to the spirit of the great apostle of the Gentiles, the very name of Jesus seemed to kindle at once the ardour of divine love: his soul was raptured at the sound; every thing else yielded to the irresistible energy; his tongue dwelt upon the pleasing theme, often repeating, as we have heard him from this place especially,

“Thou dear Redeemer, dying Lamb,

“We love to hear of thee.

These delightful truths flowed delightfully from his lips; “his doctrine distilled as the dew;” while this place has resounded with the essential glories, the deep humiliation, the all-sufficient grace, the unchanging love, of a dying Jesus; themes ever dearest to his heart, and therefore ever on his tongue.—He had the most exalted views of the Saviour of guilty men, and therefore he “preached Christ,”—his sole subject,—his all in all; knowing at the same time he could “warn every man” of his sin and danger, could “teach every man” in the way of peace, truth, and righteousness, without deviating from this one subject, which he did with that peculiar wisdom with which God had favoured him.

But we must hear his voice no more! Oh that

the remembrance of it might found in our ears till we enjoy the blessings it expatiated on ; till like him we die in this faith of Jesus, and enter upon the fulness of its glories, beyond even his burning heart and shining talents to express. But to return.

Having spoken of faith in general, as it comes from God, realizes the truth of God, sanctifies the heart, brings its blessings into enjoyment, and returns to him the glory, we must now consider,

SECONDLY, The peculiar advantages of Faith in death.—“These all died in Faith.” Or, as our dear departed friend would have rendered it, in *the* Faith, the faith of Jesus. They had the same grand object of faith as we, we have the same object of faith as they, Jesus Christ, in life and death the friend and Saviour of his people. These antient believers died (as he expresses it) in the *act* of faith, acting faith on Jesus and his faithful promises: or, as the apostle, in the following part of this verse, “ not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were *persuaded* of them, and *embraced* them ;” persuaded of their truth, embracing them as excellent, as the objects of their earnest desire and love.

As Faith is the great mean of triumphing over the world, of passing comfortably through life, so is
it

it the only source of consolation in the awful hour of death.

ETERNITY is a very serious subject, and, when standing on the borders of it, it appears a serious thing to launch forth, a serious thing to know what is my ground of hope of an happy eternity. But faith secures upon the rock of ages; gives a calmness and quietness to the soul; and, when in lively exercise, an unshaken confidence; opens the prospect beyond; and perfumes a dying bed, and the mouldering dust, with odours of the heavenly world. Thus it was with our dying friend, who confirms our faith by his dying testimony; thus it shall be with that sleeping dust we lately committed to the silent tomb, in sure and certain expectation of a resurrection to eternal glory.

A dying believer, under the power of faith in death,

I. Rests in a firm reliance upon the promise and truth of God.

Faith is not always in the same lively exercise in life; nor is it always at its highest in death. But, when it leads the humble and supplicating sinner to the Saviour of sinners, as the only hope of Israel, it brings salvation if not the immediate comfort of it.

It

It may also be so in death. It may be weak in its exercise, attended with fears and doubts, and yet be the faith of God's elect, the faith that bringeth salvation in the end. This was the sentiment of our late beloved pastor when he preached his funeral sermon for Mr. Jones. Where he observes, "For wise reasons God may not then fill his people with great comforts, but cannot you trust your comforts with God, the God of all comfort? will you not have time enough to be comforted when you get to heaven?" But still, we may observe, this is not God's usual method of dealing with his people. He has promised "when they pass through the waters he will be with them, and through the rivers they shall not overflow them, &c." His rod and his staff are therefore their stay and their support. There is a faith that rests the soul on Christ, that brings a quietness and serenity beyond all the glittering joys of earth, though in the pains of death. The believer tries his foundation, and he finds it secure. And the more tried, the more precious is this corner stone of his dependence. In the confidence of faith "he will trust in the Lord and stay upon his God." Jesus is all powerful and gracious, the promise is true, his God is unchanging, and there he anchors through
the

the storm. Hence there is a pleasing tranquillity of hope that holds him free from alarms, or perhaps he is able to say still further, with the apostle, " I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day." This, we know, is a hope that maketh not ashamed; for it brings peace into the conscience, and love into the heart, and gives all the glory to a covenant God in Christ by trusting his truth. But this is not all. Faith in more lively exercise brings not only a quiet hope, but

II. Divine supports and consolations.

" As afflictions abound consolations by Christ abound also." While the believer views all things as in the hand of his covenant God, all things under the direction of his covenant head in glory, he is assured that all is *well*. The time, the measure, the issue, of his afflictions, he knows, are " in that covenant which is well ordered in all things and sure." He is confident, therefore, they will be conducted for the *best*. If he hath lived long in the Christian warfare, " the trial of his faith worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope;" and he rests upon the promise, expecting present help and present supports, whatever his necessities may be. Nor is
his

his faith vain; " His strength is equal to his day ;" " The eternal God is his refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." He has secured his pardon by an application to the blood of Christ ; he hopes to stand justified before God in the righteousness of his redeemer ; he has known the power and virtue of the Spirit when he was convinced of sin, enabled to believe on Jesus, turned from the love of sin, and taught to delight in God and his ways. And now the same faith supports his hope, for, if when he was an enemy he was reconciled to God by the death of his Son, he trusts that, being reconciled, he shall be saved by his life. Rom. v. 10. He cannot look back on his good works as the ground of his encouragement. If he has done any, it was the grace of God that made him what he was ; the sin that was his own debased them all ; and, though as the work of the Spirit of God he acknowledges the grace with thankfulness, the one foundation of a sinner's hope is still his rock and refuge, and there only he finds it safe to trust. The full sufficiency of the Redeemer is his support and confidence ; faith has embraced and lived upon it through life, faith still adheres closely to it in death, and, if now in lively exercise, happy is the dying bed of faith. A present sense of

pardon and favour, direction and support, brings a joy unspeakable and full of glory, and renders the dying moments of the believer the sweetest moments of earthly existence.—When, separated from the world and all its concerns, faith carries on the intercourse with the world unseen, happy is that converse which the soul enjoys with God. Many have borne their testimony to its delights, and now we add another to their number. Satisfied with, and retired from, the world, it is sufficient that *God is there*. His presence can solace pain, can sweeten affliction, can turn trouble into joy, and elevate the dying believer in the ecstasies of faith.

“ These all died in faith.” When we read the account of this circumstance in the Old Testament, each is nearly in the same words.—“ He gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years, and was gathered to his people.” Gen. xxv. 8. I cannot but think our venerable father in Christ was describing his own experience, when treating on this passage, in his *Triumph of Faith*, in the chapter on old age; every part of which is applicable to himself. Let us present you with an abstract. “ His old age was good, in body and soul. Whatever infirmities he had they were intended

tended for good, and actually did him good. He was a very cheerful pleasant old man. The peace of his mind had a sweet influence on his temper and behaviour. It kept him from being fretful and peevish in his family, &c. He was also happy in his last years: for he spent them in faith, and, when they came to an end, he died in peace; with his last breath he committed his spirit into the hands of him who had redeemed it. "Full of years." It is in the original one word—he was satisfied—He was satisfied with what he enjoyed of the favour and friendship of his God, who had been his shield to defend him from all sins and enemies, and also had promised to be his exceeding great reward. This he obtained, when he was gathered to his people, to the general assembly and church of the first born, and to the most blissful communion of the three in Jehovah. All the children of Abraham, treading in the steps of his faith, have the same God to deal with, who keepeth promise for ever."

These are the joys of faith. But another act, and it is the last act of faith before it is changed into fruition, is,

III. It enjoys the prospect of everlasting glory.

The apartments of death are no other than the

temple of the Lord, and death itself the very gate of heaven. The happy believer, dying in the faith, and ripe for glory, with the triumphant views of faith before him, with lively but patient expectation awaits the summons to enter into the joy of his Lord. Thus there is “an abundant entrance ministered into his kingdom and glory.”

The allusion is most beautiful: it is that of a ship, with all its sails expanded, entering with a fair breeze into the port for which it is destined; that its owners, the storms and labours of the voyage being over, may enjoy in quietness and security the benefit of their former toils. There is not a passenger that wishes to return upon the stormy ocean, but each welcomes with shouts the approaching land. Such is the view by which faith apprehends the land of promise. No more toils—no more weakness—no more afflictions of body—weariness of mind—doubts of unbelief—or horrors of temptation: these shall soon be laid down, buried in the depths of the seas, lost in the waves of death, to be seen no more. The dying believer goes down to the grave, having hold of the hand of his redeemer. There *he* lay; and as he arose so all his followers must. He falls asleep in Jesus, as quietly as the weary traveller lies down to

rest, waiting the morning of the resurrection. His sleeping dust shall sleep in peace, the care of a covenant God, who was Abraham's God long after he lay in dust. But that moment the imprisoned spirit breaks from its confinement, and enters the city of God: "absent from the body, present with the Lord." And soon shall he change this vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the mighty working whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself. There is not a more glorious sight on earth than this. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints;" precious their dying faith, precious their immortal spirits, precious their sleeping dust. But beyond "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."

To die with faith in exercise is to realize the prospect, to anticipate the joy, to possess the earnestness of immortality. There every faculty shall be exalted and enlarged, every holy disposition completed, and all employed in the eternal contemplation of the divine wisdom and glory, in his attributes, works, and ways, and in the eternal enjoyment of his presence and unchanging love. Here is the end of

faith, when all its trials and its conflicts are over. And, however feeble its present efforts, it shall soon be conqueror, and introduce to "A FAR MORE EXCEEDING AND ETERNAL WEIGHT OF GLORY."

I have been led to these views from the well known character of the dear, departed, servant of God we now lament: and from the peculiar circumstances, and progressive dealings of God towards him, in his last affliction. Each of our observations will be illustrated and confirmed by his living character, and dying consolations. He was on earth a display of the power of grace; and is now, no doubt, in the immediate presence of him, whom with a peculiar ardour, and jealousy of spirit, he loved and served below.

To speak of his character is not an easy thing, especially to me: but I shall speak the sentiments of my heart, and leave it with God. Not that I am afraid of exaggeration, while, as I know he would, I ascribe the glory to the grace of God. He was a character that God had formed for his own glory; and with regard to his failings, for no doubt he had such, it is a sufficient apology to say of them all, that, though he was a great man—a wise man—a good man—and a man of God—he was a *man*.

Perhaps

Perhaps some of you may think I detain your attention too long, while others, I know, who loved and valued him, will not think any thing beneath their attention that respected him, nor any time too long to recollect the benefits which they have received by his ministry. I shall, therefore, enter more minutely into circumstances, not to extol the man, though now beyond the reach of injury, but to illustrate the grace and power of God, which made him what he was; to derive additional arguments for your faith, additional motives to your love of that divine Redeemer, whom he so ardently loved; and to persuade others to love and serve so good a master, who “giveth not as the world giveth,” but is faithful in life, faithful in death, and crowns all with his eternal presence and glory.

The Reverend William Romaine was born September, 1714, at Hartlepool, a small town in the county of Durham, that will from hence be more remarkable as the birth place of such a character than any circumstance besides.—He was educated first at Hertford College, and afterwards at Christ Church College, Oxford; where his early genius and his attention to literature eminently discovered themselves.

Of this I have been favoured with a remarkable anecdote.

Dress was never his foible, his mind was superior to such borrowed ornaments ; and, immersed in nobler pursuits of literature, before consecrated to a still more exalted purpose, he paid but little attention to outward decorations.—Being observed to pass by rather negligently attired, a gentleman who was a visitor inquired of his friend, a master of one of the colleges, “ who is that slovenly person with his stockings down ?” The master replied, “ that slovenly person as you call him is one of the greatest geniuses of the age, and is likely to be one of the greatest men in this kingdom*.”

At this time he became acquainted with some, who were afterwards the brightest ornaments, and dignitaries, of our Church ; who, though they could not follow him in his increasing religious views, and therefore in a course of time continued but little intimacy, always acknowledged him with respect, and, we trust, have now welcomed him to immortality. We have a testimony as to his eloquence from one

* This was told by the late Julius Bateſ, author of the Hebrew Lexicon, to a friend now living.

of these, whose natural and acquired talents made him no inferior judge of such attainments: in which he compares his affecting and engaging elocution to the flowing style of Cicero;

“ Nor Tully’s eloquence forsake Romaine.”

But all these abilities were, by grace, laid at the foot of the cross, and made to bow, however humiliating, to whatever might promote the glory of his master, and the good of men. Soon after he opened his mouth to preach, the Lord enlightened his mind with clearer views of his truth, and warmed his heart with the love of Christ and the love of souls.

He came to London, expecting here to find engagements; but, waiting for some time without success, he had nearly left the place; and this city had most probably been deprived of his so valuable and successful labours, but for a most remarkable interposition of providence; which, as I have heard him relate it with pleasure to myself, and it shews what great events hinge upon the most trivial, and to us accidental, circumstances, I will relate, not doubting but it will afford you equal pleasure in the hearing.—He had actually sent his trunk on board a vessel, and was himself walking down to the water side to secure his

his passage, when he accidentally, or rather providentially, met a gentleman, a total stranger to him, who inquired if his name was not Romaine, as, being acquainted with his father many years ago, he observed such a likeness as induced him to take the liberty of inquiring: he replied, it was. He then informed him that the Lectureship of that Parish was vacant*, and asked if he would accept it: he promised to do so if obtained without his canvassing (which he never would undertake); when, being successful, he altered his determination, and, from that time, has continued his labours to the good of multitudes in body and soul in this city.

A little after he obtained the morning preaching of St. George's, Hanover Square. But, alas, the dignities and riches of this world are not the best preparations for the reception of the Gospel! He was driven from thence under the glorious imputation of crowding the Church with those who thirsted for the salvation of the Lord. And it was well observed by a nobleman to one who made that complaint, that "he wondered such complaints should be made with respect to the House of God, by those

* St. George's, Botolph Lane.

who could bear to be much more incommoded at the playhouse without complaint." An observation equally applicable in the present day as fifty years ago.

In the year 1749 he was chosen Lecturer of this Church; as he preached in this place forty-six courses of Lectures. The opposition which he here first endured, and the boldness, firmness, and integrity, with which he sustained it, some of you well remember: till by the voluntary interposition of the late Bishop of London he was relieved; who had an early intimacy with, and always continued to express a high respect for, Mr. Romaine. But upon this we will not enlarge. Our venerable Minister hath lived long enough to live down opposition; and persecution is not the character of the present day: though we know that, even now, the distortions of envy, the bigotry of names, and the misrepresentations of ignorance, can overspread the excellency of a character that would otherwise be highly esteemed. In this place he went through the whole Bible by way of exposition *once*, and many parts *twice*; and here he closed his labours in the service of his Lord and Master.

An equal interposition of Providence introduced
him

him to his Living of Blackfriars: but the circumstances I am not thoroughly acquainted with.

The leadings of providence must in all these appear still more remarkable, when it is remembered that he would never solicit a vote on any occasion; persuaded that it argued a want of faith and confidence in God, whose work he was engaged in, and who would, no doubt, provide a place for his glory. He considered it indeed beneath the clerical character; but, as he was never backward to acknowledge the obligation when received, it was evidently not pride but principle.

To the last of these he was chosen about August 1764, but did not commence till March 2, 1765. With what fear and trembling, with what sense of his own insufficiency, with what dependence on the Lord, he entered upon that cure, is evident from a most interesting letter, written at the time upon that subject*.

He

* The Letter begins thus. " I have ever had such awful apprehensions of the cure of souls, that I durst not, though often solicited, undertake it. Ever since I knew the plague of my own heart, I have found myself plagued to death with watching over it. What must it be to watch over two or three thousand! who is sufficient for this? I feel myself as unfit for it, as to have the government of the world upon my shoulders. But, being appointed

He began his ministry there with that glorious declaration, "I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." And how truly he adhered to this determination you all know. He continued to serve his parishes in the faith and truth of the gospel, till he grew old among them; and then bore the richest fruits in his old age. In this he was peculiarly favoured, being afflicted with no symptoms of bodily decay, till the last stroke came that took him from earth to a better service above. It may truly be said of him, as of one of old, "his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated;" and he has frequently spoken of it with peculiar gratitude to God.

It is also remarkable that, after publishing the *Life and Walk of faith*, and realizing it in his conversation, he had just published his *Triumph of faith*, when, called by faith to triumph over afflictions and death, the last enemy, he finished his work, and entered into the joy of his Lord.—But, before I speak of this,

appointed to this Church, not only without my seeking, but against my will, and having an undoubted call from *God*, therefore, my sufficiency for the work being of *God*, I dare not stand out, I have been forced to say, "Here I am, send me."
—&c. &c.

I must

I must beg to be indulged with a few words as to his general character.

As a MAN he was a firm, faithful, and instructive, friend, a lively and edifying companion. He possessed a natural cheerfulness of disposition, and firmness of mind, which, sanctified by grace, shone forth in the holy joy, and confidence, of faith.

He had a quickness of apprehension, and a readiness of determination. In his conversation, as well as in his writings, he was short, and sententious; which was often misunderstood for want of temper and irritation. But in his *domestic* character he shone forth the ornament of his profession, and an evidence of the power of grace: the kindest of husbands, the most affectionate of fathers, and the best of masters. Of this we have the most convincing proof, since all who were about him loved him, and those who were the nearest to him loved him the most.

As a SCHOLAR—his acquisitions were extensive, and his learning sound. He had a just and critical knowledge of the three learned languages, but especially of the Hebrew tongue, which he much cultivated, much delighted in, and pressed on others to acquire. He had a comprehensive acquaintance with nature, and natural philosophy; and if in this last he held

some peculiar views, different from the present generally approved system, he had well studied the points, and stood, even in his peculiarities, in company with some of the brightest geniuses, and deepest scholars, of his time. But, what must be mentioned with peculiar pleasure, with all these natural and acquired abilities, he knew when to conceal his acquirements as well as how to use them; nor ever appeared ostentatious to exhibit them. When led to the knowledge and power of the truth his natural talents were consecrated for God; and in the pulpit, with a divine simplicity, he remembered nothing but his Master's work and glory, and studied nothing but how best to impress his excellency and salvation on the minds of men. And, though he might have been reckoned amongst the wise of this world, he was contented to be esteemed a fool by such, that he might be "wise to win souls:" for he had been taught, by grace, to account the reproach of Christ greater honour than all the dignities on earth.

As a CHRISTIAN—I have frequently admired the cheerfulness, the consistency, and fervour of his piety. He evidently lived much with God; inflexibly abstracted from the world; much in the enjoyment of his redeemer's presence, and in the realizing views
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of eternity in its most glorious and animating light. His devotion was pure and sincere, glowing lively from a heart filled with the love of Christ: he was always ready, therefore, to throw out a hint, in his concise manner, for the glory of his name, and the consolation of his people; though he studiously avoided every controverted point as unedifying and dangerous. His whole conduct was in unison with his profession; and, to the honour of the grace of God, a long life needs no apology.

As a DIVINE—he had a most comprehensive knowledge of the word of God, the great repository of spiritual wisdom, which he always read regularly through once in the year; and he enjoyed an especial clearness of perception in its grand and fundamental truths.

As he was a minister of the church of England, he was such from conviction of its apostolic authority; he was, therefore, throughout life firmly attached to its discipline, its liturgy, and its doctrines. In his earlier years he had resisted the offer of much temporal advantage, and endured much opposition in it, rather than depart from its communion; well convinced that he was in the line of duty, and God, who had placed him there, would provide him his
work,

work, and supply his necessities. His firmness has sometimes been interpreted into bigotry; but, as I conceive, through inattention or misunderstanding. If such a temper might arise in the fervency of youth, maturer wisdom had meliorated his disposition; at least, I must profess, that the many years I have been with him (though many opportunities offered) I have never once heard him express any thing but the most cordial love to all, “who loved our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity:” this was his only test—denominating all things else but the scaffolding of the building, that must be taken down before the whole shall appear in its glory. And I am in possession of a letter that discovers the most unbounded liberality and candour of his mind.

As a PREACHER—he shone with peculiar advantage. God had formed him for natural elocution and simple eloquence. His voice possessed an admirable sweetness; his countenance a liveliness of expression; his eyes sparkled with delight, and every feature expressed the sensibility of his heart while engaged in his delightful work; his very countenance was a sermon. Yet all was natural and unaffected; for he took as much pains to simplify his style, as many do to ornament and polish. His energy, his pa-

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thos,

thos, his lively action, arose from the fervour of his spirit in love to Christ. While, therefore, he was simple without meanness, and plain without vulgarity, he was dignified without laboured elevation, was understood by the lowest, while the highest were edified and pleased.—Early in life he was a *Boanerges*, and there is a peculiar fire, energy, and alarming tendency, in his early compositions: but this had given way to a milder manner, and more delightful subjects in general. Yet still, when such subjects occurred, he touched them with uncommon force and effect, so as to astonish and alarm the soul. On the sabbath he took the whole range of gospel truth, but, at those seasons when he supposed his hearers to be more select, his favourite subjects were the glory of Christ, and the great privileges of the gospel. These he represented in the most glowing colours, and with the most lively animation. His was, no doubt, a dispensation of remarkable light and evidence in the great fundamental truths of the gospel, much beyond what most attain. The clearness of his views, and the perspicuity of his expression, exhibited the glories of truth to the understanding, and diffused the force of truth upon the heart. There was also a peculiar style in his preaching, which

which to us seemed most calculated to enlighten the understanding, to warm the affections, to animate the desires, and to sanctify the heart in the love of God. Zealous for the glory of Christ, and jealous in his spirit of every thing that might detract therefrom, he could not bear without sensible indignation any thing of a contrary tendency; he would say boldly, with the apostle, “ if any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ he must be Anathema Maranatha.” When speaking on such subjects as these, we were ready to suppose that the flaming seraph, flying from the altar, had touched his heart and lips with the burning coal, that kindled there the heavenly flame, and diffused its influence all around. He seemed, with one foot on the heavenly land, taking a survey of the glories which were there, at the same time stooping down to earth that he might draw us after him. I confess, when I have heard him on these subjects, I have been ready to wish to resign back my commission; had I not heard in my ears that awful sound “ woe be to *me* if I preach not the gospel;” if I had not recollected that “ the excellency of the power is of God and not of us.”—Wherever he came he was ready to declare the Saviour’s grace. Of this subject he never tired in

public or in private. He came immediately to the point, with a peculiar art that God had given him; could say much in little; and what he uttered was always fresh, always new, as though the delightful story of redeeming love had never been told, never been heard before. And yet the humble views he entertained of himself are thus beautifully expressed in one of his letters to a friend.

“ I am an old preacher, and have seen enough of his glory to be ashamed of myself: I reprobate all my services, and, if I was to begin again, I would try to shoot higher, and I do. Blessings on him, he is above all blessing and praise !”

With such gifts of God, consecrated in simplicity to his glory, no wonder he was popular; and, though he bestowed more himself than most apprehend, that he was the greatest instrument of charitable contributions. But he was still more useful,—how effectually so, by the great power of God attending his ministrations, let multitudes declare that are now honoured to publish the same truths to guilty men, or who enjoy its abundant blessings, to the knowledge of which they were brought by his instrumentality. He might say of many, with the apostle, “ need we epistles of commendation to you, or letters of commendation

mendation from you? ye are our epistles written in our hearts, known and read of all men."

But now that voice that charmed you, that charmed so wisely, shall be heard no more! God hath closed his mouth in death—that he may have all the glory, and to discover that the power was of him. And yet we bless God that he hath left his dying testimony, and confirmation, to the truths he preached. Many of you have received them as your motives to holiness, and the ground of your consolation and support in time and eternity; and you are ready to ask, after so bold a maintenance of them through life, what were their effects in the time of trial?—A patient reliance—a consolatory support in affliction—and triumph in the hour of death. He proved, and experienced, his foundation stable. And, to shew what God did for him then, and to confirm your faith and hope, we have collected a few of his dying views and expressions. May God make them useful for this purpose.

It is plain he never said any thing with a design to be again spoken; for he evidently forgot all but God, his own soul, and eternity, absorbed in the present enjoyment of Christ, and the glorious prospect that was before him.

Soon after he was taken he expressed his firm persuasion that he was not for this world but for another, not for time but eternity. And, on that very morning, he prayed earnestly in the family for divine supports, whatever troubles might come upon them, which might be many; and afterwards expressed his hopes of a joyful eternity.

In a few days afterwards, “you are taking,” says he, “much pains to prop up this feeble body; I thank you for it, but it will not do now.”

His only companion was his Hebrew Psalter, which lay close by him, and out of which he frequently read a verse or two, not being able to attend to more. The nature of his disorder was such that he could speak but little; and, being once asked if he would see some company, he replied, he needed no better company than he enjoyed. O happy those who are thus satisfied in God!—But there was a progress in his experience, much like what we have before stated in the dying faith of the believer. As soon as taken, though sensible it was for death, there was that sweet reliance upon the promise and truth of God, which he so often inculcated. Hence arose that remarkable patience, that not one fretful or murmuring word ever escaped his lips. The more

evidently the effect of grace, as through his long life he had scarcely known what bodily affliction meant ; and had never, till very lately, been interrupted by illness in the discharge of his ministerial duties.

Soon after he was seized, a friend called upon business. He took the opportunity of saying, he hoped he was better, and happy in his views : “ Yes,” replied he, “ upon that point I have no doubt, for I have much of the presence of Jesus with me.” And, upon his taking leave, he, in his humiliation of spirit, begged to be remembered to me for my prayers, as he was unable to converse with me, and hoped his friends and the whole congregation would remember him at the throne of grace. This he frequently afterwards repeated to myself.—At other times he said, he had been in the deep waters, but had enjoyed much support.—That he waited to enter into the courts of the Lord, that his soul was athirst for God, yea, for the living God.

After he had been from home, upon his return, I visited him, and found him a little revived. He said to me, he had lain long at first in the arms of death, and, if recovering, it was very slowly ; “ but this,” says he, “ is but a poor dying life at best, however, I am in his hands who will do the best for me,” and

added, with a peculiar energy which I shall not soon forget, “ I am *sure* of that. I have lived to experience all I have spoken, and all I have written, and I bless God for it.” He then uttered something as to the importance of such views at such a season, but, being exhausted with these few words, he reclined back in his chair, and I could not understand them.—After much the same expressions he added to another friend, “ I have the peace of God in my conscience, and the love of God in my heart, and that you know is sound experience”—and again, “ I knew before the doctrines I preached to be truths, but now I experience them to be blessings.” Where is the foundation that will bear such a trial as this? where is that opposer of the essential glories, the atoning blood, and abounding grace, of the Redeemer, that can bear such a dying testimony to the doctrines *he* maintains?—Speaking of the visit of a friend, he said, he thanked him for it, he had come to see a saved sinner. This he had often affirmed should be his dying boast, and that he desired to die with the language of the publican on his lips, “ God be merciful to me a sinner.”

When he again left town his strength rapidly decayed. But now, “ as his outward man perished,
his

his inward man was renewed day by day." Weakest in himself he was strongest in the Lord; nearer the goal the surer the victory; nearer the confines the brighter the glory — To shew his acquiescence in the providence he said, that it was now near sixty years since God had first opened his mouth to publish the everlasting sufficiency, and eternal glory, of the salvation of Jesus; and now he had shut it, that he might give him more experience in his heart of what he had said concerning it in his life. He never complained of any thing but *sin*, but this he lamented as the source of all our miseries, especially one morning, when he was expounding, in family devotion, the prayer of Hezekiah; saying, to those around him, he should have had none of those weaknesses and languishings if he had no sin.—At another time he exclaimed, " Oh how good is God, what a good night he has favoured me with, and what a blessed prospect I now see before me!"—In one of his lowest states, being asked if God was with him, he replied, " Yes he is indeed, and he is my God." Such views as these he often expressed throughout his illness. — At another time he said, he should soon be upon the mount Zion that is above, there he should dwell

dwell for ever, and there should be his everlasting rest.

The day before his death a friend addressed him in this manner, "I hope, my dear friend, you now find the dear saviour Jesus precious to your heart. "Yes," he replied, "yes, yes, more precious than rubies, and all that can be desired on earth is not to be compared to him." The friends who were with him have no doubt but his last hour was the happiest hour of his life. He was in the full possession of his mental powers to the last moment ; and near his dissolution he cried out "*Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty*, glory be to thee on high, for such peace on earth, and good will unto men." After this he continued in prayer and praise, for his lips were seen to move, and his hands were united in a praying posture, till his breath was exhausted, and without a struggle, groan, or sigh, he fell asleep in Jesus. Oh happy death that is in the faith of Jesus ! God grant us like mercy. He was quickened by faith, lived and walked by faith, triumphed over opposition, enemies, and trials, then he died in the faith of Jesus ; that he might be a confirmation to you his lamenting friends of the reality of those glorious Truths, and the preciousness of that exalted

exalted Saviour, that he had so long preached, in whom many of you have savingly believed.

I need not now, I am confident, apologize for saying too much ; but many I fear will think I have said too little, and, if so, I trust they will pardon my insufficiency. But, I must yet add, it is a loss on earth we may reasonably lament. — The *King* has lost a faithful subject, a zealous and conscientious advocate—his *Country* a praying friend, and intercessor before God—the *Church of England* one of its brightest ornaments, most attached to its discipline, its liturgy, and its doctrines—the *Church of God* at large a most faithful and successful minister, who exhibited the truths of the gospel, through a long and laborious life, with peculiar lustre, and under a glorious unction of the Spirit of God. But if we turn the scene we rejoice ;—we rejoice in the complete triumphs of his faith, now that he has been called to the kingdom of his Master, and welcomed to the joy of his Lord.

If I may be indulged with a few minutes longer, it shall be employed in impressing, upon the minds of the different characters here present, the use that God may design us to make of this solemn and affecting providence.

And

And let us, if such be here, speak,

First, to the infidels and mockers of the present day.

Draw near, ye sons of dissipation, and consider the death-bed of the believer. He dies in faith, and triumphs in the prospect. You also *must* die. Now you may ridicule the faith and expectation of the believer; but we challenge the wit, the wisdom, of infidelity to controvert the reality of such supports, and the heroism of the infidel to display the like. I have heard of the calmness and quietness of such, or rather their insensibility, in death; but never of their rejoicing in its pains. It is not the pleasure of satisfaction, but the awful impulse of necessity: "this is a grief, and I *must* bear it." "Oh that ye were wise, that ye understood this, that ye would consider your latter end." Hear the testimony of one of your most boasted advocates in the view of death, compare it with the peaceful, the joyful, end of faith; and may God seal the instruction for your soul's advantage. It is that of no less a person than the great Lord Chesterfield.

"I have run," says he, "the silly rounds of business and of pleasure, and I have done with them all. I have enjoyed all the pleasures of the world, and consequently know their futility, and do not regret their loss. I appraise them at their real value, which is
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in truth very low; whereas those who have not experienced always overrate them. They only see their gay outside, and are dazzled with their glare. But I have been behind the scenes. I have seen all the coarse pullies and dirty ropes which exhibit and move the gaudy machine, &c. When I reflect back upon what I have seen, what I have heard, and what I have done, I can hardly persuade myself that all that frivolous hurry and bustle and pleasure of the world had any reality; but I look upon all that has passed as one of those romantic dreams which opium commonly occasions; and I do by no means desire to repeat the nauseous dose, for the sake of the fugitive dream. Shall I tell you that I bear this melancholy situation with that meritorious constancy and resignation which most people boast of? No; for I really cannot help it. I bear it—because I *must* bear it whether I will or no.—And I think of nothing but killing time, now that he is become mine enemy.” &c.—I leave this to your own reflections.

Let us speak

Secondly, to those who have heard the gospel from his mouth, but heard in vain.

My friends, what a dispensation have you suffered to be lost! If you have not heard him to advantage I

should despair of persuading, if I did not know that the work was of God; and that Paul might plant, and Apollos water, but God must give the increase.

Oh how affectionately has he besought you, that “you would not receive this grace of God in vain.” The very last sabbath evening that he stood in this place he particularly urged it upon your hearts. He prayed with peculiar fervency, he wrestled for you at a throne of grace, that, if that were the last time he should address you, God would make it effectual; that he might not rise up as a swift witness against you in the great day of the Lord. Some of you perhaps have had your passions moved by his affecting persuasion, but yet your hearts have remained unchanged by grace; you have given an assent to the doctrines he preached, but have not experienced their power. It is such as you who have brought the ill-founded charge of licentious tendency on such glorious truths. May God discover to you their nature, efficacy, and glory, and make you to feel their influence, and then you will soon live down the calumny.--If he hath pleaded in vain on earth, oh hear him from the grave—hear his dying testimony. It is as though he had said, “Believe, my brethren, the truths that I have spoken are the truths of God. The power of them I have known,

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the consolations I now experience. Jesus is indeed that *precious precious Saviour* to a dying sinner that I have so long proclaimed him to be. Without an interest in his salvation you must perish in your sins, but in Christ there is no condemnation. I have pleaded, and ye have not received; oh stay, stay no longer; but fly to the sinner's refuge. Let me not finally accuse you that I have laboured in vain and spent my strength for nought and in vain. Let the grace and compassion of a dying Saviour to me a saved sinner incline you earnestly to seek after his salvation, and ye shall find: for he is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him."

You are ready to wish that you might die the death of the righteous; oh then seek after that almighty Saviour that can make you righteous before God; and that gracious Spirit that can sanctify the heart, to bring forth the fruits of righteousness to his glory.

Let us speak

Thirdly, To the weak in faith.

To these like his Master he payed in his discourses a peculiar attention. Consider what God has done for his people, and let your faith be encouraged. Whatever you are in yourselves, the
same

same Jesus, the same Almighty helper, can produce the same glorious effects in your hearts, and the same mighty consolations in the time of your afflictions: for he hath "all power in heaven and in earth." Now you look forward fearful and discouraged. But many, "who through fear of death have all their life-time been subject to bondage," have been supported like him in the deep waters: and as the prospect drew near, fear vanished, hope revived, and the nearer prospect of an eternal world hath been attended with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Leave then all your concerns in his hands. And, while trusting in Jesus, and living to his glory, he will manage the best for you, and grant all needful supply even to the end: He will be "your God for ever and ever, and your guide even unto death."

We will conclude by speaking

Fourthly, A few words to those whom God hath enlivened and comforted by his ministry, and who, therefore, loved his person, and lament his loss.

It is true you must hear his voice no more! no more his lips shall sound through this place the glories of the Redeemer, the power of his arm, the compassion of his heart, the riches of his grace, whereby your minds have been enlightened, your
 hearts

hearts warmed, and your afflictions comforted. You cannot forget the force and energy with which he spake, and the consolation you have often received under his ministry: and you ought not. “Remember those who have had the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God, whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.” His Master has seen good to call him to himself; and as far as it relates to him it is all *right, absolutely right*. He says to you, “Be still, and know that I am God.” This afflicting providence should, therefore, quicken us who are left as labourers in his vineyard to greater diligence and activity: should quicken you to pray more earnestly for your Ministers; for the effusions of his Spirit, and the almighty efficacy of his grace, upon us and our ministrations. But it calls you not only to pray but to LIVE: to shew the power of the truth; to contradict every false aspersions; and to evince, by the strongest proof, that “the grace of God teacheth to deny ungodliness and worldly lust, and to live righteously, soberly, and godly, in this present world.”

We are told that “the righteous is taken away from the evil to come.” If such a view as this should impress the mind, let it incite more earnest

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prayer

prayer to God for a guilty land. Often has our venerable Pastor stirred you up to this in the most animating manner; and requested you, by the prayer of faith, to commit all into the hand of the Lord, undisturbed and undisturbed; to continue in your duty to your king and country, assured that a peaceful praying subject is the best subject of a state, and most likely to promote its welfare and his own.

May we all profit by these instructions, that yet our abundant privileges civil and religious may be spared to us. “The Lord’s voice crieth unto the city, and the man of wisdom shall see thy name: hear ye the rod, and who hath appointed it.” Let the present solemn intimation be heard and improved, that the day may never come when our teachers shall be driven into corners; nor when confusion and anarchy shall take place of order and of law. May God hear the earnest prayers of his departed servant, that true and vital godliness diffused abroad may correct the folly of the times, and promote universal peace on earth, and good will amongst men.

Some of you had hoped, that your beloved minister would have been the instrument of solacing your bed of affliction, and pointing you forward to

your eternal rest. — But he is gone before ! And, if he could now address you from the heavenly world, he would encourage you to press the closer to God.

“ If the streams are cut off, come then more immediately to the fountain. If the instrument be gone, let Christ be your all in all. Follow me as I followed Christ. See in me that he is an all-faithful friend. He will prepare your way, comfort you in death, and then bring you to the same eternal glory.”

Oh that we may so live by the faith of the Son of God that, whenever we are called to die, we may die in faith, trusting in the Lord, rejoicing in his presence, triumphing in the believing prospect of his glory. Then may we all meet our dear departed minister on high—our feet standing on the mount Zion which is above, “ when all the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads ; when they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.” God grant us this grace, and to him, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, be the eternal praise. Amen.

THE END.

The Gospel Treasure in Vessels of Clay ;

A
S E R M O N,

OCCASIONED BY THE DEATH OF

The Hon. and Rev. W. B. CADOGAN, A. M.

RECTOR OF ST. LUKE'S, CHELSEA ; AND VICAR OF ST. GILES'S,
READING.

PREACHED IN

The Parish Church of St. Andrew Wardrobe,
and St. Ann, Blackfriars, London,

On Sunday, January 22, 1797,

By WILLIAM GOODE, A. M.

RECTOR OF THE SAID CHURCH, AND LECTURER OF ST.
JOHN'S, WAPPING.

*Blessed is that Servant whom his Lord when he cometh shall find
so doing.*

L O N D O N :

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1797.

Entered at Stationers' Hall.

A

S E R M O N, &c.

2 COR. iv. 7.

BUT WE HAVE THIS TREASURE IN EARTHEN VESSELS,
THAT THE EXCELLENCY OF THE POWER MAY BE OF
GOD, AND NOT OF US.

SOME of you, my brethren, are too well acquainted with the circumstances which have led me this day to the consideration of these words. My mind has been seriously impressed with that most affecting Providence which has taken place in the course of the last week, and given a painful demonstration of their truth. And I am persuaded that all of you will enter into my feelings, and join your sentiments of sorrow with mine, when I inform you, that the Church of God has lost an able, a faithful, minister of the word of life; that the great Head of his church, the wise disposer of all events, has taken to himself one whom we have often heard with pleasure and with profit, by whose occasional labours we hoped yet more to be profited, who has been greatly useful in his station, and promised still greater use-

fulness for a length of time to come. I mean the Rev. Mr. Cadogan. With regard to himself we sorrow not, his work was finished, and his reward is with the Lord. But, in whatever view we consider this event to the church, it bears a solemn aspect; we can only pronounce it right, as it is the act of him, "who doeth that which seemeth good in his sight," and what seemeth good to him we know *must* certainly be so. Here we submit and say, "the will of the Lord be done."

As the faithful minister we lament was well known and beloved amongst us, when these words engaged my attention, I did not attempt to resist the impression which they made, convinced that the design of them would be more effectually answered while so unexpected a providence solemnizes the mind. With this view let us consider the *gospel as a treasure—its ministers as earthen vessels—the excellency of its power of God*. And oh, may the Spirit of grace and power pour upon us his peculiar unction, that we may be the witnesses of its excellency to his own glory.

FIRST, We are to consider the gospel as a treasure.—What the apostle alludes to will be clearly evinced by a short view of the preceding verses. Here the apostle is speaking of "the word of God"—"the manifestation of the truth"—"that Gospel which is hid to them that are lost, but is in truth the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, whom he preached"—Yea, "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."—This is the treasure. And though conveyed to us in such mean, unworthy, and brittle, vessels, the treasure is yet the same, and hereby the glory is reserved for him to whom alone it is due.

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The gospel is then a glorious treasure, and we see what it is that constitutes it such, it is CHRIST in the Gospel, exhibited there in the dignity of his person, the all-sufficiency of his work, and the inestimable blessings of his salvation.—He is the very essence of the Gospel, the very essence of all treasures. Without an interest in him, were we possessed of all the riches of the universe, we should be miserably poor. With him, though poor in this world, we are rich indeed. “He is that treasure hid in a field, which when a man hath found, (and knows its true value) he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath and buyeth that field.” Mat. xiii. 44.—This is the treasure put into the ministers of Christ (well is it if it be put into their hearts), and which they are to exhibit, to administer, to communicate, by displaying the glories of this divine Saviour—by discovering the all-sufficiency of his salvation—the freeness of his grace—and inviting poor miserable sinners of the sons of men, to come freely and partake of the whole.

“To whom God would make known (says this apostle) what is the *riches of the glory* of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is *Christ* in you the hope of glory: whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man, &c.” Col. i. 27, 28. And why? because “in him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.” Col. ii. 3. Yea “in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily (really and substantially).” Col. ii. 9, 10. Since then there is such fullness of all blessings, in him, what ideas shall we select, what views shall we present to you, from the infinite glories of this wonderful person? Here is a rich Saviour indeed, rich in himself with all the glories of the Godhead, and rich in blessings to communicate to all his people.—In these views, “he is precious to you which believe.” And, if he be so now when we see his glories

but as through a glass darkly, what shall he appear when we see him as he is !—What prospects now engage the mind of our late dear departed father in Christ, and of our friend, who so lately has joined him among the society of the redeemed !

Their views were very similar on earth, and no doubt now, united in the same vision of his glories, they unite in the same song of praise, “to him who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, be the glory and dominion—to God and the Lamb be equal praise.”

At present we can only behold his glories as in his word ; and, blessed be God, “unto me who am less than the least of all saints is this grace given to preach among miserable sinners the unfearchable riches of Christ.” -- Here then let us turn our attention, and contemplate these unfearchable riches

Exhibited I. In the rich and precious *truths* of that sacred repository—The great truths of the gospel, as connected with Christ, are a treasure of inestimable value, had we but eyes to see their glory, and hearts set right, and fitted for the enjoyment.

They are exceedingly delightful to the contrite sinner ; full of comfort and consolation to the believing mind. The gospel truly answers its name, good news—glad tidings—for it brings under our observation, “What eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, and blessings that it had not entered into the heart of man to conceive.”—It is a truth of this glorious gospel of Christ, that there is a covenant of grace and salvation entered into by the eternal Father, on behalf of guilty sinners.—It is a truth of his glorious gospel, that Jesus Christ is the mediator and surety of this new and better covenant ; that he hath fulfilled all its terms, purchased all its blessings, and secured their enjoyment for all his people ;
that

that he hath wrought out and brought to us an everlasting righteousness, fully answerable to every demand of the holy and unchanging law of God; that he hath offered up an atoning sacrifice, infinite in its value, eternal in its efficacy, and so adequate in every respect to the great design, that infinite justice cannot but rest satisfied in the work, and glory in the honour which it has received thereby.—Hear it, thou afflicted conscience, and be at rest—For it is now also a certain truth of the glorious Gospel of Christ, that God is a God of peace in him, well pleased for his righteousness sake, reconciled to sinners, and reconciling the world unto himself; that “there is pardon for infinite offence, by means that speak its value infinite,” this atoning sacrifice of Jesus, through which a poor perishing prodigal may return to his heavenly Father’s house, and be welcomed to all its provision, its protection, and its treasures.—It is a glorious truth of this precious gospel, that Jesus our redeemer is “gone into heaven, there to appear in the presence of God for us:” yea that he in our nature is seated upon the throne of glory, “head over all things to his church”—It is a truth, that in him is all-sufficiency, infinite sufficiency, to carry on his purposes of grace, in the world, in the church, and in the hearts of all his people, in their present sanctification, and in their faithful preservation through all their trials, difficulties, and temptations, to the world above.—It is a truth of this glorious gospel of Christ, that life and immortality are brought to light thereby; an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away.—It is a truth, that casts a bright beam of glory over the whole, that all who die, or rather sleep, in Jesus shall meet around his throne, shall participate of his blessedness, and be enriched with the riches of his

glory throughout eternity—What truths are these !—But these things will appear still more surprising when we consider them,

II. As connected with “ the exceeding great and precious *promises*” of this gospel of Christ.—“ All the promises of God, says the apostle, in him are YEA and in him AMEN, unto the glory of God, by us,” 2 Cor. i. 20. This brings the invaluable treasures of those divine truths near to our hearts, and directs us in the application, and into the satisfying enjoyment of their abundant blessings.

This it is that constitutes the great glory of the gospel, that it is intended for perishing sinners ; that such are invited to, and such are made really partakers of, its grace.—As what Jesus did he did for his people, so what he is he is for them, for their benefit and salvation. And who are they ? Every returning penitent is, no doubt, among their number, yea all who are willing to come to him, to receive him as their Redeemer and their Lord, to trust themselves in his hands, and to receive from him freely all the blessings of salvation. What he intends to do for such he has graciously informed them, and irrevocably insured to them, in the promises of his word. And, while faith is persuaded of and embraces these, it is impossible that a penitent sinner should be dejected, or the humblest believer distressed. Let us cast our eyes for a few moments on that sacred repository of divine engagements, and we shall be compelled to confess, there is not a want we can feel, nor a situation into which we may be cast, but a rich provision is here made for our supply and consolation, purchased with the blood, laid up in the fullness, of the Lord our Redeemer, and presented for our acceptance in his word. And for whom ?—for sinners of the sons of men, the hungry and the thirsty,

thirsty, the weary and the heavy laden with the guilt and consequences of their sin.

Let us begin, where a convinced and penitent sinner will always begin his confessions and his prayers, with his need of *pardon*ing mercy. We address such in the language of the Old Testament, with words of encouragement like these. "Come now and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow, though they be red like crimson they shall be as wool." Is. i. 18. In the language of the New Testament we bring the same consolatory message, and inform him, that "we who were once afar off are made nigh by the blood of Christ," for he is our peace, and that—because "in him we have redemption, through his blood, even the forgiveness of our sins, according to the riches of his grace." Eph. ii. 13, and i. 7. How precious to the wounded spirit and the contrite heart such discoveries as these! Feeling himself to stand guilty before God, condemned by a holy law, set home upon his conscience by the Spirit of the Lord, he hears with wonder and gratitude a message so reviving, abounding with such undeserved grace; he hopes that *his* iniquities shall be blotted out as a cloud, and *his* transgressions as a thick cloud, when assured that there is mercy with God through Jesus Christ, and in him plenteous redemption.

The next want that a guilty sinner feels is that of acceptance and *justification* in the presence of a holy God. He knows that without a perfect righteousness no creature can stand accepted before his great Creator. The law makes its demand, a demand which must be answered, and, while he feels himself a transgressor, he acknowledges the sentence just. In himself therefore he is destitute of that righteousness

ness which alone can commend him in the sight of God, without the ability to atone for past transgressions, or to perform the necessary obedience for the time to come. That Gospel which promises salvation to such sinners, must discover "the gift of righteousness," and this it does.

The prophet Isaiah has represented this under a most beautiful allusion to the showers of rain descending from heaven to revive the earth, and causing it to produce its fruit abundantly. "Drop down, ye heavens, from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness: let the earth open, and let them bring forth salvation, and let righteousness spring up together; I Jehovah have created it." *Is. xlv. 8.* "Hearken unto me (says the Lord by the same prophet), ye stout hearted that are far from righteousness"—"hearken unto me ye that follow after righteousness—for my righteousness is near, my salvation is gone forth." *Is. li. 1, 4.* And the apostle, from the instance of Abraham, informs us how this righteousness is to be received and enjoyed. "For, as faith was imputed unto him for righteousness, so shall it be imputed unto us, if we believe on him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." *Rom. iv. 24, 25.*

Thus, standing in his righteousness, made over by a divine gift, and received by faith, "we are justified from all things."—Yea, "we are complete in him." *Col. ii. 10.* This is a gift that wonderfully enriches a poor sinner. The happy subject of it may dismiss his tears, raise himself from his miserable poverty, and join the triumphant language of the prophet, "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness,

that I might stand in his sight as the bridegroom decked with his ornaments, and as a bride adorned with her jewels."—Is. lxi. 10. Thanks be to God for this unspeakable gift.

Does the contrite sinner yet feel fresh wants arising, and that without a *renewed nature* he can have no enjoyment of a holy God? "He is our sanctification," and the regenerating influence of his enlightening and enlivening Spirit can, and does, create the hearts of his people anew in Christ Jesus, and begin to restore in them that image of righteousness and true holiness from which we are fallen. This is the great gospel promise. "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you," (the acknowledged emblem of the Spirit in his sanctifying grace) and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you, and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them." Ez. xxxvi. 25—27. Compare Heb. viii. 10. And this is realized in the experience of all who truly belong to him.

But now, set out in the Christian race, with his face towards Zion, he needs *direction* through the perplexities of the wilderness, and that direction is at hand: for "thus saith the Lord thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel, I am the Lord thy God which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee by the way which thou shouldest go." Is. xlviii. 17.

Yea, the rich *provisions* of his providence and grace shall attend the needy traveller, like the heavenly manna, and refreshing stream, through the wilderness of old; and equal miracles be wrought, though

though not perhaps always so evident, to supply the necessities of his chosen flock. "When the poor and needy seek water and there is none, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them. I will open rivers in the high places, and fountains in the midst of the vallies, I will make the *wilderness* a pool of water, and the *dry land* springs of water." Is. xli. 17, 18, &c. Fear not then, thou afflicted and distressed believer; dark and gloomy as thy circumstances may be, encourage thyself in the Lord thy God, the God of Israel; who engages to repeat even Israel's miracles for thy support and consolation.

But how shalt thou be kept secure through all thy trials and enemies to the end? Sensible of thine own infirmities and corruptions, the prospect before thee often makes thee to tremble; but, kept by the power of God, thou shalt be *preserved* unto salvation. "I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good; but I will put my fear into their hearts, that they shall not depart from me." Jer. xxxii. 40. Yea, the Lord will give *grace*, and the Lord will give *glory*, and no good thing will he withhold from them that walk in sincerity before him. Blessed then is he that trusteth in the Lord. Ps. lxxxiv. 11, 12.

What news is here for dying sinners, ministers as well as people; what an inexhaustible repository of spiritual treasures is the Gospel of Christ, exhibited to Faith, and brought experimentally into the heart of every true believer! Let us then view this Gospel

III. In the riches which it actually communicates to all who receive its grace.—That must be a treasure indeed that ennobles as well as enriches those who possess it. And so does the gospel—It raises wretched sinners to the honour of the sons of God.

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“Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.” Gal. iii. 26. It gives a disposition suited to so exalted a dignity, and enables us to cry, “Abba, Father.” And it gives a title to an inheritance worthy of such a relation, “for he is not ashamed to be called our God since he hath prepared for us a city.” Heb. xi. 16. Without the word of the Gospel we had been poor indeed, in the knowledge of God, of ourselves, and of futurity. Without the knowledge of that Jesus as ours, held forth in his word, however we may fancy ourselves rich and increased in goods and to have need of nothing, we are spiritually poor, and miserable, and blind, and naked. We possess nothing that can recommend us to the favour and love of a righteous God; nothing but what merits, through sin, his displeasure and his wrath. We are as poor as that miserable wretch, who has forfeited all his possessions, by rebellion against his lawful sovereign, and is about to suffer the just punishment of his crimes.

This, in a spiritual view, is the real situation of man. But in Jesus the attainder is taken off—the forfeited inheritance restored—yea, innumerable privileges and blessings, purchased by his blood, secured to the believing sinner. With Christ we are rich indeed, we have all things and abound. Not all the riches of both the Indies can make a man so rich as the possession of Christ as his. He who hath secured his portion here by faith, is rich in divine favour and love; rich in the present communications of spiritual blessings, enjoyed often with a sweet tranquillity of mind, when faith and hope, enlivening devotion, bring the fragrance of heavenly joys into the chambers of secret retirement; rich in the pleasing expectation that casts a beam of glory around the clouds of life; rich in the graces of the Spirit, wrought in the heart,

heart, as the meetness for fuller enjoyment in the world to come.

Possessed of these an apostle, and many with the apostle, have rejoiced in tribulation, having peace with God: yea, have joined the triumphant language of an ancient believer, "Now, Lord, lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation."

The treasures of the Gospel are not then like the treasures of earth. Go, ask all around, and try what else can bear the comparison.—It is their distinguishing excellency when all things else desert us, to support and elevate the sinking spirit. What else like these can make us rich in sorrow, rich in trials and afflictions, rich in poverty, rich in pain, rich in dying agonies, yea, rich in death. Then the Gospel of Christ opens to us.

IV. The riches of *glory*. There we are told of that rest which remaineth for the people of God. A rest from all those troubles, sorrows, temptations, and sins, which interrupted our best enjoyments, and broke unwelcome into our most spiritual devotions.—There is that crown of righteousness which fadeth not away—The eternal weight of glory—The rivers of pleasure that make glad the city of God—in his presence where there is fulness of joy, and at his right hand where there are pleasures for evermore.—There no cloud shall intercept the bright shining of the sun of righteousness; we shall be perfectly like him, for we shall see him as he is.—But here our conceptions fail us.—Our dear departed fathers and brethren in the Lord know these things best. And, could they return to instruct us now again, what think ye would be the subject of their exhortation? No doubt the same which so engaged them while on earth, only with ardour abundantly increased from
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views so much more intimate and clear. "Secure above all things, ye sons of men, an interest in Christ—that appointed, that precious, Saviour. He is the treasure of earth, the treasure of heaven. He alone can enrich you with eternal riches. Press on then towards the mark, for there is indeed a glorious prize of our high calling of God, in Christ Jesus." Thus the Gospel is a treasure.—Let us secure an interest in it, and we cannot but be rich indeed, for time, and for eternity. We are now to consider

SECONDLY, The ministers of this Gospel, who contain, and whose office it is to dispense, this treasure, under the representation of earthen vessels, or vessels of clay.—There is a peculiar beauty in the contrast which the apostle here makes of the inestimable treasure of the Gospel of Christ, with the mean and brittle vessels from which it is dispensed. Nothing can in a more striking manner evince to us the wisdom and the goodness of God, and more especially the excellency of his power, as that by which alone his truth can become effectual.—It is, no doubt, the great design of God in such a dispensation to magnify his own grace and power; and there are several ideas, which seem naturally to arise from the use of such an allusion, which will tend immediately to this point. We will endeavour to point them out, dwelling most on those which appear to us most important, most natural, or just. It has been observed

That vessels must be made by the hands of the workman, and so the ministers of the Gospel must be the workmanship of God. Though I do not conceive that this particularly entered into the mind of the apostle, in the present instance, yet the doctrine is certainly just.—As men are not born Christians,

tians, much less are they born ministers, but made so by the same distinguishing grace of God. An Isaiah must have his lips touched with a live coal from off the altar, before he can be either willing or able to declare the message of the Lord. A Paul must be a chosen vessel, and *sent* by him to bear witness to his name and truth. Let us not suppose these to be peculiar cases; though evidently so as to the circumstances that attended them, yet not as to the grace bestowed. When the apostle is, therefore, speaking of those diversities of gifts with which the church was blessed, he tells us, "all these," from the highest to the lowest, "worketh that one and the self same spirit, dividing unto every man severally as he will." 1 Cor. xii. 11. And, in another place, He that ascended up on high, and gave gifts unto men, when he gave some apostles, and some prophets, gave also by the same spirit, evangelists, pastors, or teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, &c. Eph. iv. 11, 12.

It is evident, therefore, that none can make a minister of God but God himself. It is he that must incline the heart, and "inwardly move it by his holy spirit." It is he that must put within the treasure of gospel knowledge, and gospel grace. It is he that must give the necessary spiritual gifts, and grant the blessing. But, to intrude into this sacred office, under the idea of this inward preparation, without the suitable outward designation, arises from very contracted views of the ways and providence of God. He, in whose hands are the hearts of all men, can, and no doubt will, open "a door of entrance" according to the regular ordinances of his church, for all whom he commissions; direct their way; appoint their stations; secure them in their work, and grant his promised presence.--Under this considera-
tion,

tion, indeed, we cannot but lament, when God takes away instruments he has peculiarly furnished, and blest; yet it should also satisfy us with the dispensation as it is *his*, who hath still in his own hands the residue of the Spirit. Then also

Vessels receive in order to preserve and to communicate. And should not the priest's lips preserve knowledge, and the law be fought at his mouth? No allusion, indeed, will hold good in every circumstance; thus it is here. Blessed be God, though we are to communicate to others, we ourselves are not restrained from the enjoyment. We also may partake of the precious treasures of gospel grace, and miserable shall we be, if while we dispense to others, we are destitute of its fruition in ourselves. Miserable indeed will it be, if when we have preached to others we ourselves are castaways. Yea, then shall we dispense the word with peculiar delight and advantage, when we can say, "what our eyes have seen, what our hands have handled," what our hearts have felt, declare we unto you: it is our desire "that your fellowship may be with us, and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his son Jesus Christ." Then will our talents, our time, our graces, be employed as they ought for the edification of the church, we shall study to approve ourselves to God, &c. and, "by manifestation of the truth, commend ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God." But this allusion may justly signify to us

Our total insufficiency to communicate these blessings as of ourselves. We are but empty vessels, the treasure is altogether distinct from the vessel, and must be derived from another source.—It can neither fill itself, nor communicate of its contents when filled. No more can the minister of the Gospel ei-

ther know the truth aright, preach it in its simplicity, or convey the power and blessings of it, but as enabled by the Spirit of the Lord. If an apostle “laboured more abundantly than they all, it was not he but the grace of God which was with him.” If “he preached Christ, warning every man, and teaching every man, with all wisdom, &c. it was according to his working, which wrought in him mightily.” Col. i. 27, 28.—It would be well for you, my Christian brethren, always to recollect this truth, you would then pray more earnestly for your ministers, bear with our infirmities, and look up to the right source for the blessings you wish to receive. When you found yourselves heavy and unfit for duties, or your ministers affected with the same weakness of human nature, your supplications would be directed for reviving influence to the God of all grace; and, when enjoying those happy frames, which sometimes animate our duties, and elevate our hearts, the glory would be given to him. For ministers are not only vessels but earthen vessels—implying

That they are in themselves, poor and mean, and unsuitable to contain or display such infinite glories.—So indeed are the best of men, endowed with the best gifts of nature or of grace: though called from amongst the wise, the mighty, or the noble, of this world. “But God hath often chosen the foolish things of the world, to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty, and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: that no flesh should glory in his presence.” 1 Cor. i. 28.

It is the great design of God to humble the pride of man. His instruments therefore have often been what
man

man would not have chosen : destitute of those polite accomplishments, that learning and eloquence, which the world so much admire. And truly, if they possess these, they must learn to despise them, in comparison of the simplicity of the faith ; to determine not to know any thing but Jesus Christ, and him crucified ; while their speech and their preaching is not with the enticing words of man's wisdom, but in the demonstration of the Spirit and of power : that the faith of believers may not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. 1 Cor. ii. 2—5.

Often indeed in the sensible experience of the same infirmities, sorrows, weaknesses, and fears, with others, they carry within themselves an affecting proof of their inability for so great a work, and are ready to exclaim, “ Who is sufficient for these things ? ” Often they are tired in the work, though not of it, and, while the spirit is willing, the flesh is weak.—Often when they see the infinite glories, and vast importance of the truth, in connection with their own insufficiency of body and of mind, they are ready to wish, with the prophet, “ not to make mention of him, nor to speak any more in his name : till his word is in their hearts as a burning fire shut up in their bones, and they are weary of forbearing, and cannot stay.” Jer. xx. 9. But this allusion implies still further—

That they are sinners by nature and by practice, to whom this treasure is committed, this dispensation of the Gospel grace.—God hath chosen, and it is an instance of his great compassion, to speak to us by men in all respects like ourselves, men of like passions, and sinful infirmities. Even a bold Elijah trembles and flies before the face of a woman, when left to prove his strength. Weak and frail,

they often discover the blemishes of human nature, and have reason, like their fellow-sinners, for humiliation and continual watchfulness. Thus they can feel for, and address themselves to, the circumstances of such imperfect creatures; while themselves are compelled to lament over their indwelling corruptions, and take up the cry of an apostle, "who shall deliver me from the body of this death."

Wonderful is it that such unlikely instruments should be the means of conveying such blessings of grace and salvation to miserable sinners. And it is a proof of the sovereign grace of God, that such frail creatures, while they feel frequent causes of inward grief, should be upheld, by the great head of his church, as stars in his hand, and should not be left to dishonour the gospel they proclaim. It is true, we have sometimes lamentable instances of this kind, which speak with a loud and warning voice, directing us to the only preserver of his saints, and admonishing us, "let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." And woe be to those who can magnify the blemishes of such, or use them, with a secret gratification, to increase their prejudices against the gospel of Christ, which yet remains the same.—But what the apostle had here particularly in view was no doubt,

That this everlasting gospel is committed in its dispensation to sinful *mortals*; dying and passing away; all under the same sentence, "dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." "Our fathers, where are they? and the prophets, do they live for ever?" No excellency of character or of office can change the vessel of clay, can exempt the person who sustains them from the stroke of death. Even in the discharge of our office we are frequently reminded, "that soon the earthly house of this tabernacle

nacle shall be dissolved." And quickly its Creator dashes it into pieces, and it moulders back to dust. Strange that such changing instruments should be chosen to carry on such an unchanging design, and administer such unchanging blessings. They sometimes appear to us of great importance in the church, but not so to him. They have only to do their allotted work, then the vessel is broken, and appears no more. Of this the present providence affords us an affecting proof.

And here I cannot decline to pay a tribute of respect to the memory of a faithful servant of the Lord, and adore what God had made him.

Early called by grace to the knowledge of the truth, he had attained peculiarly clear and evangelical views of its nature and its glories. Though, from his family and connections in life, he had reason to expect an elevated situation in the church, and honour in the world, no sooner was his mind enlightened by the gospel, and his heart influenced by its power, than he sacrificed all to win Christ—to preach Christ—to bring his fellow sinners to the knowledge of Christ crucified. His faith was not a mere notion or profession, but "gold tried in the fire, that shall be found unto praise and honour and glory." Like Moses, "he esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt:" or, like the apostle, "he accounted all things but as dung and dross for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord."

His natural talents were strong and penetrating. His memory was remarkably tenacious, as by twice reading he could make a subject his own. His knowledge of the scriptures was very accurate and extensive, particularly of the Old Testament, the design and evangelical import of which seemed familiar to his mind.

Yea his general views of the gospel were enriched with a peculiar spiritual energy, much like those of our late venerable minister, to whose memory he paid the last tribute of respect. His preaching was plain and simple, but powerful and convincing, attended, at the same time, with such a serious and commanding address, as could not but obtain the attention of the most careless. Every one felt that what was spoken was believed—was uttered under a deep conviction of its truth, and every one (at least for the time) felt its importance enforced upon his own heart.

A firm friend to the church of England, with the utmost candour and liberality towards those who differed from him, it was his sincere desire to promote its interests and its welfare. And happy would he have been to have seen all the friends of its evangelical doctrines uniting to maintain its discipline, and the acknowledged friends of its discipline uniting to maintain the purity of its articles of faith. His views of these were, it is confessed, what are generally called Calvinistic. And indeed it appears strange to those who embrace the same sentiments with him (whatever may be the prevailing opinions of the present day, or the possible construction of some parts of their language) that any one should seriously deny it to have been their original design to support this system of doctrine, who compares their most literal and evident meaning with the well known writings and sentiments of those venerable characters who compiled them. But, whatever may be thought of these principles, in his case, at least, they must be acknowledged to have been productive of the abundant fruits of righteousness, and charities, which may long render his name dear to the poor who so liberally experienced them.

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He who is infinitely wise, and does nothing without design, had not called such an instrument out from the world, and so fitted him for the work, but for essential service. He made him, therefore, very useful in his situation, gave him many seals to his ministry, who shall be his joy and crown of rejoicing in the great day of the Lord. To them he no doubt was, as he ought to be, peculiarly dear, while the amiable condescension of his manners (always forgetting the dignity of his birth) made him beloved by all.—God kept him faithful and consistent to the end. And, after holding forth the word of life, on his Thursday evening lecture, he was suddenly seized with a disorder that quickly terminated his work on earth.

But, though his affliction was sudden, it met him not unprepared. “When his apothecary entered he said, I am dying, but I bless God all my affairs are settled for both worlds. I am dying, but I am going to live for ever.—I die in the faith of the gospel, and in love and charity with all men, especially with all my Christian brethren,” and then in prayer sweetly committed his partner and his friends into the hands of the Lord.”——“He died as he lived, strong in the Lord and in the power of his might; glorified God in the fires; and, though with much weakness and extreme pain of body, his mind was perfectly composed, and his judgment unimpaired to the last. He took his leave of his distressed partner and his household, and exhorted them to resignation and confidence in God. “I am going (said he), I am dying, but I am quite happy, I die in the faith of the Lord Jesus.—And the last words he was heard to articulate were, “Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty.”——Thus, dying in the full triumph of
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faith,

faith, confident of his interest in the salvation of the Lord, and looking forward with holy joy to the glory that is beyond, he sweetly realized those animating words, chosen by him as the last tribute of respect to the memory of our late venerable pastor—“This God is our God for ever and ever, he will be our guide unto death.”—Oh that we all might be followers of them who through faith and patience now inherit the promises—By such a death we cannot but feel more sensibly the importance of such a life. But his work was done, and the vessel is broken, that God may have all the glory.—This leads us to inquire,

THIRDLY, The design of God in raising up, employing, and, we may add also, in casting aside, such instruments as these—“That the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us.”—There is then an excellency of power in the gospel, though administered by such feeble means. And this, above all besides, evinces it to be the gospel of God, that he acknowledges it as his, and attends it with his blessing. The earthen vessel, that brought some of you acquainted with its glories, has been removed, but the effects remain. You yet experience these effects of gospel grace, the most excellent that can ever be produced on sinners, and you are well convinced that nothing but an almighty power could ever have wrought them.

You were in darkness and ignorance through sin, and you became *enlightened* by the truth. You have been brought to see the great evil of sin, the dreadful state and condition you were in by nature, while all your once boasted excellency vanished, and you stood in your own sight sinners guilty and condemned. Whenever the Gospel is truly preached,

this influence is yet experienced; yet not from the ministration itself, but from the power of God.

Yea, you have been *converted* by the efficacy of grace, not only brought out of darkness into light, but from the power of sin and Satan unto God. While you have found and lamented the guilt and power of sin, you have felt a deliverance from both, in your conscience and in your heart. A change has been wrought. You have been born again of the Spirit by the word of truth. Your hearts have been effectually turned, and you have loved those ways of God which formerly you hated, and hated those ways of sin that just before you had delight in. You cannot but feel and acknowledge the change. It was wrought through the ministry of men, but not of themselves, the excellency of the power was of God and not of us. To him therefore you ascribe the glory, and say, "by the grace of God I am what I am."

Under a deep sense of your sin and danger you have been *brought to Christ*. Convinced of your need of his atoning sacrifice, and justifying righteousness, you have fled by faith to this hope set before you. You have seen his glories so as to believe and trust in him, and are now living the life which you live in the flesh by the faith of the Son of God. Your pride has been humbled, and now you renounce all besides, to know and be found in him. What a change is here from the self exalting views of nature! The very work itself teaches you its author, and where to ascribe the glory, to the excellency of that power which is of God.

Yea, you are *sanctified* by this truth. You cannot live in sin as heretofore, but have learned that important lesson how to crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts, by faith in Christ.

And by the same Gospel of truth you are continually

nually *preserved* and *edified*. You sometimes come weak, and are strengthened; you come dark, and are enlightened; doubting, and are satisfied; fearful, and are encouraged; tempted, and are succoured; backsliding in heart, and are restored. “You wait upon the Lord, and renew your strength; mount on the wings of faith as on eagles wings, run and are not weary, continue to go forward, and faint not.” The gospel comes in demonstration of the Spirit and with power. When you look upon the instrument you are well convinced that what you experience was beyond his power to perform, and you acknowledge the hand of God. And if, when beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, you are changed into the same image, it is evidently by the Spirit of the Lord. Thus he reserves the honour to himself.

God might have spoken to us by the most illustrious instruments; he might have commanded his obedient angels to proclaim his grace to sinners; it had been a message worthy of their dignified and exalted natures, and an additional honour to those favoured spirits.—But then we might have trusted in the messenger, and forgot the work of God. Now he is continually reminding us where to look, and where to depend. Our gourds are continually withering, that we may seek shelter at last only beneath the protection of his own gracious care. And, while we enjoy, and use, and bless him for, the means, he daily calls us to remember, “the excellency of the power is of God and not of us.”

Two or three remarks, tending to apply this important subject, shall close our present address to you.

First. Our text teaches us a lesson of trust and confidence in God, under the darkest dispensation towards his church.

His church is in his own hands; instruments are all

all of his own raising; it is from him they are furnished, from him they receive the blessing. When vessels are broken, the treasure is yet preserved the same, in the hand of him who made them all, and who has yet the same heart of compassion, the same arm of power, and the same fullness of the Spirit. Yet, when we recollect, "the righteous is sometimes taken away from the evil to come," let us not be of those who lay it not to heart. While we recollect, they are sometimes removed in righteous judgment, because the gift has not been improved, we ought to attend to such providences with solemn consideration, and be careful to derive some benefit from them, when they come within the sphere of our own observation or connexions. Confident however that the great Head of his church has yet the faithful care of it, we must submit to his most intricate visitations, and rely upon his wisdom and his grace.

The words of our text in connexion with such a providence as the present,

Secondly, Speak loudly in admonition to remaining ministers of the Gospel. May I hear and improve the warning voice! Is it my office to dispense the inestimable treasure of the Gospel of Christ? May I never mix impurity or error with his unchanging truth. May I not be as those which corrupt the word of God; but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God, speak always in Christ.—Am I only a vessel of clay? May I always remember where the treasure is to be obtained, and who alone can enable me to dispense and communicate to your hearts.—Pray therefore for me, my brethren, for your own sakes, and for my sake, that I may be kept thus humble and dependent, and that this grace
may

may be given me, for the edification of the church. And surely such considerations as these should urge us all to a faithful discharge of the duties of our important trust. How soon may these vessels be broken! How soon may we be unable to bear any more testimony for our Lord and Master, to call sinners to partake his salvation, or encourage believers in the good ways of the Lord! How uncertain is the tenure of life! Your late venerable pastor, who seriously warned and sweetly encouraged, is now no more. He, who from this place, payed the last tribute of respect to his memory, has unexpectedly followed him through the gates of death; though, if strength of constitution, or importance of situation, had formed any security, he had yet survived. And God, in whose hands are the spirits of all flesh, only knows how long I may be permitted to plead his cause among you.—Bear with us then, my brethren, in our faithfulness. Bear with us when we watch for your souls, as they which must give account, when we warn you of the danger of sin—when by the terrors of the Lord we persuade men—when we urge you by the value of your immortal souls—when we exhort and persuade you, by the tender mercies and rich grace of the Gospel, to accept a free salvation, and give yourselves to the Lord. Oh that God would enable us to be more faithful, and more earnest, and grant from the excellency of his power abundant success.—Let us unite together, for this purpose, in the energetic language of the prophet, “Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord, awake as in the ancient days, in the generations of old.” Or in the similar language of our church, “O God, we have heard with our ears, and our fathers have declared unto us, the noble works that thou didst in their days, and in the old time before

fore them. O Lord, arise, help us, and deliver us for thine honour."

The words of our text, in connection with such a providence as the present,

Thirdly, Speak loudly in admonition to the hearers of the Gospel.—The Gospel is God's ordinance, attended with his excellent power to the enlightening, the sanctifying, and saving, sinners of mankind. Surely then we should carefully examine what effect it hath produced upon us.

You have long heard this Gospel of salvation, and yet, perhaps, you are still under the influence of your sins, and led captive by the powers of darkness. The God of this world hath blinded your eyes that its glories are not perceived. Though you have "line upon line, line upon line, precept upon precept, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little," you are yet insensible either of the evil of sin, or the excellency of spiritual blessings: you are yet walking in the ways of sin, bold in your iniquities, or carelessly indifferent. How awful will be your situation when you meet your ministers, who have spoken to you in the name of the Lord, before his throne of judgment. "We warned those sinners, shall they say, we have spoken to them again and again, they have neither been destitute of admonition, reproof, encouragements, or exhortations. We are clear from the blood of them, and, if they perish, it is because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved."—"Awake then, thou sleeper, and call upon thy God, if so be thou perish not." Yet the abundant treasures of mercy and grace are open to thee, "Ask, and ye shall have; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." But remember, the word of the Gospel cannot be heard in vain.

vain. There are but two effects which it can answer, one of which it must answer upon thee. It must either be “ the Saviour of life unto life, or of death unto death in all who hear it.” 2 Cor. ii. 16.

Beware, my fellow sinners, that you do not take offence at the Gospel, because you perceive the imperfection of human nature in those who declare its truths.—God hath chosen such earthen vessels, by which to convey the blessings of his Gospel, that the glory may be his. Intreat then the teaching and divine influence of his spirit ; for, whatever the vessels may be, if you partake not of the treasure they contain, you must be poor indeed—poor for eternity.

Perhaps you may have heard the Gospel long, so as to distinguish its truths, and discover something of its glories : but has it reached your hearts in the love and power of it ? Without this it will avail you nothing. To have a form of godliness without the power, is of all things the most dangerous, as it is generally most deceitful. Remember, my dear friends, how soon your minister may die, how soon you may die ; and then all your means of grace are over. If they have not yet answered their design, well consider the state you are in, and how you shall appear, when neglected means shall only aggravate your guilt, and increase your condemnation.

Happy are you, my hearers, to whom the Gospel has come in the excellency of its power, to enlighten, to quicken, to sanctify, and to save. You will rightly esteem your ministers as stewards of the mysteries of Christ ; and, while using them as God’s appointed instruments to promote his glory, but looking beyond them for the blessing, you will by their means be more and more enriched with grace, edified in faith and love, comforted in your journey
 6 through

through life, and safely carried forward to the end. They indeed shall pass away—those vessels of clay shall be broken,—but “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever.” His love is unchanging, his power almighty, his righteousness and salvation everlasting. “The moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool; but my righteousness shall be for ever, and my salvation from generation to generation. Yea lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath, for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner; but my salvation shall be for ever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished.” Is. li. 8, 6.

Happy they who are interested in these unchanging treasures—Oh, thou eternal Jehovah, one God in three persons, the God of grace and mercy, grant us the enjoyment, and, with the excellency of the power, the excellency of the glory shall be thine. Amen and Amen.

THE END.

THIS plain Sermon, first preached as a tribute of respect to the memory of a most valuable character in the church, is now published with the same view.— It as nearly corresponds with what was delivered, as recollection would enable, or circumstances admit.— Some few alterations are made in the account of the deceased, from attaining further information.— Such as it is, it is submitted to the perusal of those who read rather for spiritual profit than for criticism:—and especially to those amongst whom the providence of God hath appointed me to labour: attended with earnest prayer for his blessing upon it, to their edification in the faith, hope, and obedience, of the Gospel.

Mercies in Judgment :

A

S E R M O N,

PREACHED ON THE DAY OF

GENERAL THANKSGIVING,

DECEMBER 19, 1797,

IN

The Parish Church of St. Andrew, Wardrobe,
and St. Ann, Black Friars, London,

By the Reverend WILLIAM GOODE, A. M.

RECTOR OF THE SAID CHURCH, AND LECTURER OF ST. JOHN'S WAPPING.


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A

S E R M O N, &c.

PSALM CI. 1.

I WILL SING OF MERCY AND JUDGMENT,
UNTO THEE O LORD WILL I SING.

TO fix our attention on the hand of God as directing all the mercies and judgments which surround us is the appropriate design of this day—a design, surely, which cannot be considered as unfuitable, when we are so apt to be forgetful. Especially are we inclined to forget our mercies,—a spirit of thankfulness to God is too great a stranger to the human heart. But, above all, when these mercies are found in the midst of judgments, we dwell upon the unpleas-

ing prospect, while we overlook the many instances of divine forbearance—the many displays of protecting power—the various interpositions of providential care—and the liberal bounties of God's gracious hand.

To raise ourselves a little from those gloomy views which sometimes oppresses the mind, to distinguish amidst our fears the causes of joy, and the grounds of better expectations, to mark the evident interpositions of Divine Power and Goodness, will excite a frame of mind which highly becomes us, and may discover more reasons for gratitude and humble confidence than on a superficial review of things we may apprehend. And, while thus we are rendered thankful for the evident answers to former prayers, we may hope that the GOD OF OUR MERCIES will become the GOD OF OUR SALVATION.

May the Lord make what shall now be spoken, effectual to excite this desirable disposition.

It may not be amiss, in the FIRST place, to remove an objection, which will tend much to depress that spirit of thankfulness, and of cheerful gratitude, which ought to lead the employments of this day. It is, I acknowledge, an
objection

objection which has been felt in my own mind, and which I have heard from others ; but which is not, I am convinced, founded in truth.

It has been said, the present situation of our affairs rather requires a fast, and the spirit of deep humiliation, than the dispositions implied in the exercises of this day.

It must be acknowledged the times are critical—the aspect of providences is gloomy—the judgments of the Lord are abroad in the earth (would to God that the inhabitants might thereby learn righteousness!)—and, in the present uncertain revolutionary spirit of the world, what will be the issue we know not. But surely we ought to remember, “ It is of the Lord’s mercies we are *not consumed*, &c.” And, if in judgment the Lord remember mercy, then it is greatly incumbent upon us, in our prayers and humiliation, not to forget the tribute of gratitude and praise.

We have a remarkable instance of this in the Jewish nation, just returned from their captivity. They were yet in great straits, surrounded with enemies who were bent upon their destruction. In the next chapter, therefore, we find them
observing

observing a solemn fast to the Lord. “ Now in the twenty and fourth day of this month, the children of Israel were assembled with fasting, and with sackclothes, and earth upon them. And the seed of Israel separated themselves from all strangers, and stood and confessed their sins, and the iniquities of their fathers.” Neh. ix; 1, 2. But, at the same time, if mercies are received mercies must be acknowledged, and therefore in the same month we find them celebrating a day of chearful thanksgiving. “ And Nehemiah, which is the Tirshatha, and Ezra the priest the scribe, and the Levites that taught the people, said unto all the people, This day is holy unto the Lord your God ; mourn not, nor weep, for all the people wept when they heard the words of the law. Then he said unto them, Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared ; for this day is holy unto our Lord : neither be ye sorry, for the joy of the Lord is your strength. So the Levites filled all the people, saying, Hold your peace, for the day is holy, neither be ye grieved. And all the people went their way, to eat and to drink, and to send portions,

portions, and to make great mirth, because they had understood the words that were declared unto them." Neh. viii; 9, 10, 11, 12. This is the temper of mind we are this day called to imitate, a temper of grateful praise, and as opportunity offers of kindness and benevolence.

These things being premised, let us proceed to take notice of the great mercies, which God has mingled in the present dispensation of his righteous judgment.

War must at all times be considered as the rod, as the scourge of the Almighty. And surely the present, in its rise, its rage, its principles, and effects, has been the most violent and destructive. It is the general scourge of Europe, in the hand of the Lord our Redeemer, to vindicate the glories of his injured person, and the honor of his cause.

The events, which of late years have been passing before our eyes, have surprized and astonished us. We have wondered at the secret springs from which they could arise, at their powerful and general operation; and these till of late have remained concealed. But, if any one would know the causes of the late revolutions in Europe,

Europe, and the state in which we stand, I would advise him to read a late publication, entitled, “ Proofs of a Conspiracy against all the Religions and Governments of Europe,” by J. Robison. There he will find the whole arising from the secret but combined efforts of infidelity—digested into separate and regular conspiracies—carried on with all the artifice, subtilty, and rancour, of Satan—laying down as principles of action what must tend to the subversion of society as well as of religion—and acting with determined perseverance, till they burst forth in all the horrors of revolution, where nothing was transacted, amidst all those cruelties and immoralities which have surprized and confounded us, beyond what their secret principles justified to themselves. What we have considered as the scum arising from the violent effervescence of revolution is here discovered as originating from settled principles of action, avowed in their secret associations. Upon this view of things, whether, had we been more desirous of it, we could long have evaded the commencement of hostilities, is a question very difficult to determine.

I will not say the war was undertaken designedly for the support of religion, but this I must say, whatever were the designs and motives of those who engaged in it, in the end it will be found, that all religion is closely connected with it, and all our civil and religious privileges depend upon a happy issue.

In this view, every success which tends to our security is a blessing for which we cannot be too thankful, when we consider what has been, and now is, the avowed temper of our enemies. Every circumstance that has been instrumental to preserve us from such a contagion, either before or since the war, is an instance of God's goodness towards this favored land: favored we yet must call it, since, whatever we may have hitherto endured through the scourge of war, our sufferings can bear no comparison to the distresses of almost all the nations around us.

Amongst the latter of these, though first in its effect, is, what none here, I trust, will deny; the religious character of our king. This, I conceive, in the present case, may be mentioned with peculiar propriety, since, the last time we met here on a similar occasion, it was our cor-

dial employ to return thanks for his unexpected recovery from a most alarming affliction ; and I hesitate not to assert, that we have now equal reason to be thankful for the prolongation of his important life, to the wishes of his people. Had we seen a king upon the throne of these kingdoms, such as filled almost all the thrones of Europe, like them he would either have joined the combination, or have been the dupe of the designing artifice, of Infidelity. And, from what we have seen, notwithstanding such obstructions to their progress, we may reasonably conclude we should then have felt all the same miserable effects, and been plunged into the same awful scene of horrors ; either in the natural course of events, or in the righteous judgment of God. But we have to bless God that ours is the only king who was not more or less the co-adjutor or dupe of their satanical designs.

The black and stormy cloud has long been hanging over Europe, and bursting here and there with the most desolating effects ; while we, though anxiously alarmed, have only felt comparatively a few drops falling as it were from its skirts. Sometimes the gathering storm
has

has seemed to be approaching nearer, but has graciously and unexpectedly been removed ; and, I trust it will yet be so, while there is in this kingdom a remnant of the Lord's people, a praying remnant, who are found at a Throne of Grace ; who like the faithful Israelites sigh and cry for the abominations of the land, and earnestly supplicate through the Redeemer the forgiveness of their own sins, and the transgressions of a guilty nation. In such general darkness and distress we ought not indeed to expect great things, nor to hope for splendid advantages ; if preserved through all in the enjoyment of our privileges, it must excite our admiration, and claim our gratitude and praise.—It is in this respect we are now called upon to mark the interpositions of a gracious God, and, blessed be his name, many such now suggest themselves to our recollection. Let us fix our attention on a few.

Some time ago it pleased the Lord to threaten us with a famine ; but in the time of extremity he opened the source of supply—then he gave us an abundant harvest which dissipated our fears ; and, in the meanwhile, stirred up a spirit

of liberality in the more opulent ; which prevented the progress of disaffection in those who might have been irritated by the keener feelings of distress.

A little while since the whole nation was alarmed by the most unusual, unexpected, and distressing, appearance. The natural bulwarks of the nation were breaking themselves down ; the very character of the British sailor was changed ; disaffection and mutiny were the only remaining proofs of courage ; our own sword had nearly been thrust into our own vitals—but the suppression was as sudden and unexpected as its rise.

The interposition of God, when an invading fleet stood upon the shores of a sister kingdom, was so evident, that Infidelity itself could scarcely but discover it. While our fleets wandered as though infatuated in the search, the hand of God alone perplexed the purposes of our enemies ; defeated their designs ; and drove them back in the way by which they came disappointed and ashamed.

But, on the present occasion, we are particularly called to recollect the three illustrious
and

and decisive victories obtained in three desperate engagements, with each of the three great Powers with whom we are at war : and each of these obtained in the very critical moment, to disappoint the designs of our enemies, and secure our threatened privileges and rights. Here the antient wisdom and valour of the British navy was again displayed, and he, who can make one to chase a thousand, or ten thousand to flee at the rebuke of one, still directed us by the same skill, still supported in our sailors the same spirit of courage and intrepidity, which has exhausted the naval efforts of our enemies : the only way in which they could personally annoy us. The last of these, both in the time and manner, appears most providential ; and, the more every circumstance is considered, the more evidently will the hand of God appear, while its effects are most important and beneficial.

If we look at those countries which have been sacked and plundered by the desolating brigands, and then turn back our eyes and consider our present situation, surely, amidst all our complaints, we must acknowledge our mercies are great ; and, while lamenting the impending judgments, must
feel

feel our obligation to join notwithstanding in the song of mercy.

We have seen our enemies conquering the most powerful and veteran armies—rolling on and accumulating a force which has prevailed to carry all before them.—We have seen them ravaging the Low Countries—penetrating over the ice into Holland, spread, as it were, by the hand of Providence to expedite their way (such a phenomenon had not appeared for near a century before).—We have observed them running over the Pyrenees into Spain, climbing over the Alps into Italy, betraying the states of Venice, reaching almost to Rome, and then rushing back again to the very gates of Vienna.

And what have they done wherever they have fixed their hostile banners? what—but spread the poison of infidelity, and accomplish (as far as circumstances would permit,) their former avowed design of extirpating Christianity, and dissolving every social bond—but in every attempt against us they have failed !!! Their navy, nearly equal with ours at the first, has dwindled almost to nothing; while ours, by the good hand of God upon us, has risen to an height unparalleled

paralleled before. The providence of God has by these interpositions evidently said unto them, "Hitherto shalt thou go, but no farther," &c. The British kingdoms have been preserved, and, in every effort against us, they, who have thrust the world before them, "have become like common men." Surely then "the hand of the Lord is in all this," and we may sing of mercies in the midst of judgments. Surely we may consider these favors as pledges of his yet continued kindness, though to an ungrateful land; that yet he hears the prayers of his people; and, while thankful for his interpositions, and supplicating his aid, he will magnify himself as the God of our salvation.

If instead of these victories we had experienced defeat, what must have been the effect? Ere now we had been deprived of all our privileges and liberties, had been debarred or abridged in the exercise of our religion, this country had become the seat of anarchy and rebellion, or devoted to decline in subjection to a foreign power. And, if any circumstance can yet more distinguishingly mark the gracious providence of God, and claim our greater gratitude, it is this; the in-ward

ward tranquillity in which this kingdom has been yet preserved, the peaceful exercise of our religious privileges, which we now enjoy ; notwithstanding the many who, in prosecuting the same disorganizing plans, have aimed the same daring efforts, or directed the same subtle machinations, against all order and religion. It is true we experience many effects of the present awful state of Europe ; but, when we consider attentively these undeniable circumstances, let us say if we have not great reason for gratitude and thanksgiving.

We will now close the subject by a few short observations, which may direct us to its proper improvement.

The FIRST use we may make of this view of present circumstances is to incite within ourselves a spirit of thankfulness.

We talk so much of our judgments and distresses, we dwell so much on the gloomy side of the cloud, that we perceive not the beams of mercy interspersed. But, let us recollect, the way to enjoy future blessings is to be grateful for those we possess ; and, while discovering grati-
tude

tude for the past, we may prefer with greater confidence our supplications for the necessities that yet remain.

Let this view of present circumstances also encourage in us a spirit of prayer and supplication.

Though things are not just as we could wish them at home or abroad, our only helper is the God of our mercies; who turns the heart even of rulers in the channel which he pleases. Our murmurings and ingratitude are not likely to change our affairs for the better. But, when we are found at the Throne of Grace, we are surely engaged in the best way of its attainment, and, through the goodness of God, we do not pray without encouragement. These circumstances of providence may justly be considered as answers to former prayer, and directions to future dependance. God will indeed hear a praying people, and, if they be but a remnant, they shall be as the salt of the land to preserve it from destruction. But, *remember*, “if the salt have lost its favour wherewith shall it be seasoned.” If God’s people are declining from a spirit of prayer and supplication what must be the issue? Whatever wise plans they may form

for the amelioration of the state, whatever activity they may discover in their execution, judgment is not far behind—"henceforth it is good for nothing but to be trodden under foot of men."

Let this view also encourage us quietly to wait for God under the necessary burdens that may arise from so unprecedented a situation.

In these, as Christians, it becomes us to discern and acknowledge the hand of God, and the effects of his righteous displeasure. It is true we feel. And we begin to feel where we might have expected it long before, in a part the most keen to sensibility in a commercial nation; but still let us again recollect, how little in comparison of all around us! While then we look to him who only can direct and deliver, while we commit ourselves to his wisdom and unerring providence, the many interpositions of his former care may encourage our hopes, that yet, in the time of our extremity, he will appear, and the dark cloud, which now hangs with threatening aspect, will break, and be dissipated by the beams of mercy.

But

But these views should above all instruct us to
BEWARE OF INFIDELITY.

Oh that I could speak it with a voice that might pervade every corner of the land, BEWARE OF INFIDELITY. This has been the cause of all the evils which have desolated Europe. And, amidst all our alarms, the greatest danger that now presses upon us springs from the rapid spread of such principles amongst ourselves, which seem to call upon the great God our Saviour to avenge his honour and his cause.—Infidelity generally makes its first advances under the plausible pretext of natural virtue and morality; conceals its true nature for a time, till the mind led from evil to evil is gradually prepared for the most diabolical plans. And, when once the authority of the Lord our Redeemer is shaken off, soon all authority will be disregarded; and, when the bonds of our obligation to God are broken, every social bond will soon be loosed and deranged. We have seen therefore those, who were the chief supporters of an infidel combination, the first to suffer its effects.—How far, in the present awful crisis of Divine Judgments, the providence of God may permit the contagion to spread, we

presume not to conjecture ; but, should it diffuse itself throughout this land, should it extend throughout the world, the world would be but treasuring up wrath for itself, and desolation from the vindicating hand of God.

Let us then, who are so favored, learn from these considerations to be thankful for, and to diligently improve our religious privileges, while continued in their enjoyment. Hitherto these blessings have been spared to us, and, in this respect, we are privileged above all the nations. We may use with peculiar propriety the language of the Psalmist. “ He sheweth his word unto Jacob, his statutes, and his judgments unto Israel. He hath not dealt so with any nation : and as for his judgments, they have not known them. Praise ye the Lord.” Psalm cxlvii; 19, 20. We trust that many of you know their value. Oh then be careful to improve them. “ Walk while ye have the light lest darkness come upon you.”

And ye that know your blessedness therein use a Throne of Grace for yourselves and a guilty nation, and wait in patient expectation the end of the Lord. But, if accepted in the
beloved,

beloved, whatever may come upon the nation, or the world, it shall be well with us ; it shall be well in time, through all the trials we are called to endure ; it shall be well in death : and, blessed be God, beyond is the kingdom of unchanging rest and peace for ever. And, when the Lord Jesus Christ shall come again, with glory infinitely surpassing, yea, disgraced by any comparison with that which now excites the gazing admiration of many of our fellow creatures, he shall come to welcome us to that blissful kingdom, and exalt us in the glories of his complete salvation.

May he by all his dispensations on earth prepare us for, then bring us there, to his own eternal praise, with the Father and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

THE END.

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FAITH TRIUMPHANT IN DEATH; a Funeral Sermon, occasioned by the Death of the Rev. W. ROMAINÉ, A. M. Rector of St. Andrew Wardrobe, and St. Ann's, Black Friars; and Lecturer of St. Dunstan's in the West. Preached in the Parish Church of St. Dunstan, Sunday Evening, August 9, 1795.

THE GOSPEL TREASURE IN VESSELS OF CLAY; a Sermon, occasioned by the Death of the Hon. and Rev. B. W. CADOGAN, Rector of St. Luke's, Chelsea; and Vicar of St. Giles's, Reading. Preached in the Parish Church of St. Andrew Wardrobe, and St. Ann, Black Friars, London, on Sunday, January 22, 1797.

True Patriotism,

A

S E R M O N,

PREACHED

IN AID OF THE VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS
FOR THE DEFENCE OF THE COUNTRY,

On Sunday March 11, 1798,

IN

The Parish Church of St. Andrew Wardrobe,
and St. Ann, Blackfriars, London.

By the Rev. WILLIAM GOODE, A.M.

RECTOR OF THE SAID CHURCH, AND LECTURER OF
ST. JOHN'S WAPPING.

L O N D O N :

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TO
THE CONGREGATION
WHO SO LIBERALLY CONTRIBUTED;
AND ESPECIALLY TO THAT PART OF IT,
AND THE
PARISH COMMITTEE
FOR RECEIVING VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS FOR
THE DEFENCE OF THE COUNTRY,
AT WHOSE REQUEST THIS SERMON IS PUBLISHED;
DESIROUS THAT IT MAY PRODUCE THOSE SALUTARY
EFFECTS OF WHICH THEIR FRIENDLY PARTIALITY
HAS LED THEM TO INDULGE THE HOPE;
IT IS NOW INSCRIBED,
WITH ALL RESPECT, BY THEIR
HUMBLE SERVANT,
THE AUTHOR.

A
S E R M O N, &c.

2 SAM. X. 12.

BE OF GOOD COURAGE, AND LET US PLAY THE MEN,
FOR OUR PEOPLE, AND FOR THE CITIES OF OUR
GOD; AND THE LORD DO THAT WHICH SEEMETH
HIM GOOD.

IT is my design this day to call your attention, and to excite your cheerful and voluntary contributions—and for what? Is it to heighten the animosity of one nation against another?—Is it to become the advocate of any party, or the vindicator of any political interest?—Is it to prolong the most bloody and destructive war that ever engaged the nations of Europe?

I am well aware that, while we are standing forth, in the present alarming crisis, to unite our fellow subjects in a display of courage, and the ex-

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ercise

ercise of human prudence, these views are attributed to us; but, unconscious of the fact, and unable to perceive one reason for the accusation, I firmly answer—no. It little becomes the minister, or even the professor, of the gospel of peace to promote the miseries of war; and most certainly I had not appeared in this solemn place as an advocate for any party, much less for bloodshed and desolation. But, I apprehend, the question which is now agitated amongst us is not, or rather ought not to be, a question of any party. The contest seems to me to be brought to a most important point. We are called, by the voice of Providence, to preserve our country from confusion, and maintain its tranquillity and peace—to prevent the effusion of blood on British ground, of which for so many ages we have happily been ignorant—to stop, by discovering our unanimity and zeal, the entrance of an implacable foe, which has sworn to plunder and destroy—to preserve our dearest privileges civil and religious, which as yet have constituted Britain the happiest nation upon earth—in a word, to preserve our political existence among the European kingdoms.—With views like these how shall not every true Briton feel the necessity of his utmost exertions? how could I refuse the opportunity, or rather the duty, of discovering my own attachment to our happy constitution, and of exciting yours? The words of my text have suggested themselves as easily accommodated to this design, and as such shall now engage our attention.

The circumstances in which they were spoken are these. The Ammonites having greatly offended the king of Israel, and apprehensive he would avenge the insult offered him, were determined to be beforehand in the attack. The first in the offence, they first declare war, levy an army, join their neighbours in alliance, and invade the land of Israel. The battle is now set in array, army against army. The Ammonites and the various parties of Syrians on the one side, and the Israelites on the other.—Through the vast numbers of the enemy the Israelites are apprehensive of danger; but, like valiant men, danger only unites them together, calls forth the exercises of wisdom, the display of courage, and the united energy of exertion.—Encouraging each other in the love of their country and the love of God, recollecting their civil and religious advantages, while like faithful and courageous soldiers they prepare for the attack, like faithful believers they leave its event to God. “Be of good courage, &c.” A suitable example for us to follow; and the consideration of its different parts will discover how applicable to existing circumstances, and will, I trust, justify our conduct, and give force to the present application.

Our attention shall be directed in the following order. *First*, we will take notice of the reasons why the welfare of our country should lie near our hearts: “There is our people and the cities of our

God.”—We shall *then* set before you the duties of faithful subjects in the time of alarm and danger : To exert every power, and to unite in those exertions, acknowledging that salvation is of God, and leaving the event in his righteous hand.—This will lead us with a peculiar advantage to the design of our present address.

I. The language of our text marks out, in a most interesting manner, the reasons why the welfare of our country should lie near our hearts.

What were the views which now engaged the attention of these faithful Israelites? “ There is our people ;” in this is TRUE PATRIOTISM.—There are “ the cities of our God ;” in this is TRUE RELIGION.—The first marks their love to man, and the interests of their country ; the latter their love to God, and zeal for his honour and his cause. I cannot direct your attention to any subjects more true, more suitable, more interesting, than these.

First. Our people are in danger, it is for them we are concerned. “ For our brethren, our sons and our daughters, our wives and our houses,” Neh. iv. 14. Every thing dear to us as a people depends upon the issue of the present contest, and the nature of that peace which we obtain: whether it be dictated by a conquering army, or confirmed between

tween two independent nations, on just and honourable proposals.

But the term "a people" implies something more. A people, properly speaking, is not a number of men unconnected with each other, without any centre of union, unregulated by common laws or acknowledged customs, this we generally call a rabble or a mob.—But *a people* is a body of men constituting a nation, united in their civil polity, governed by the same magistracy, subject to the same laws, interested in the same privileges, enjoying the same liberties, except as, in some instances, regulated or restrained for the benefit of the whole. Thus it is that God, in the language of scripture, denominates those who fear, love, and serve him, "*his people*;" and, when calling Gentile sinners to himself by the influence of his grace, we are directed to consider this event under the same allusion, "I will call them my people which were not my people;" (compare Hof. ii. 23. Rom. ix. 25.) "which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God," 1 Pet. ii. 10. Sin is a principle of disunion, and sinners under its dominion can never properly unite together, while it is the more awful effect of a sinful state to separate us from God—from his favour now, and his kingdom eternally.—But happy those who are called by his grace, and devoted to his love; united again under his government, it is their peculiar and unfailing security to live in the kingdom of his dear Son, "to have

their citizenship in heaven," and to be interested in all the privileges and immunities of his kingdom of grace and glory.

Let us see if we have not here something to be jealous for,—something to watch over,—something that we ought studiously, yea at any expence, to preserve; if we have not reason to say, "Be of good courage, and let us play the men *for our people*."

In this respect may we not then affirm, *even yet*, notwithstanding the novel inventions of a false philosophy, that Britain stands first among the nations in its natural or civil privileges and enjoyments. Surely no one, unless the eyes of his understanding are distorted by the influence of inveterate prejudices, can look around him on the present state of Europe, and not congratulate himself that he was born a Briton. The ill success, or rather absolute failure, of every recent attempt to ameliorate the state of society, plainly shews the fallacy of those principles from which those attempts have originated, and the danger of trusting to the most refined and plausible speculation, in matters of practical concern.

If we take a survey of the history of mankind we must observe, that a Republican government has ever been most turbulent and unstable; and surely philosophical speculators must have wrought up their minds to a great degree of delusion to suppose that, while human nature remains the same, the same causes will not produce similar effects. It must also be acknowledged that more has been done
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by the system of our government, to promote the general good of those who are under its influence, than by any that either has or does exist in Europe, may I not say, upon the face of the whole earth. And, if any of its privileges have lately been abridged, let it be remembered, that such restraints have been imposed with the alone view of securing it from the infamous attempts of murmurers, desirous to destroy the whole.

Happy Britain, if we knew our privileges as a people! Do we not sit under our own vine, and under our own fig-tree, none daring to make us afraid?—Do we not exercise our several trades and professions in peace and security?—Do we not enjoy the produce of our labours and the gains of our industry undisturbed by any apprehension of restraint?—Is not the equal distribution of justice amongst all ranks and orders of society the glory of our courts of judicature?—May we not do any thing, that shall promote the good of ourselves or of our families?—Yea, may we not do every thing but what tends to injure the community and destroy the happy fabric of our government?—In a word, do we not enjoy, in the fullest sense, that personal liberty, personal security, and security of property or character, which have always been considered, by the best writers on the subject, as the three grand constituent parts of civil liberty?—And what more can be done in any society, or by any government, under heaven?

Yet these privileges are not only enjoyed

for the present, but secured to us by a constitution, that remained the wonder and envy of all Europe, till a philosophical frenzy seized the minds of men, and raised an hypothesis which appeared beautiful to the framers, but originating in principles which contradict the very state of human nature, was found too refined for human practice even among those who first produced it. And shall we then undervalue our blessings, and be ungrateful to that God who in his providence has placed us in their enjoyment, because they are not extended to the utmost that our imagination may conceive possible? Shall we forsake our actual security for a philosophical chimera, an ideal happiness, that is not for the present state of man? Shall we pull down the beautiful structure of our government, because it may not be administered exactly to our wish? or shall we surrender it quietly to the rude hands and desolating rage of an enemy implacable and unprincipled? Rather shall we not unite every exertion, and shew our cheerful alacrity, in its defence? Shall we not be courageous and “play the men for our people?”

But our government, however excellent its form, has many imperfections—no doubt it has.—But there are many abuses which have insensibly crept in—no doubt there are.—Yea many things require to be amended and reformed—no doubt they do.—And whence does all this arise? whence but from the state of man, who never has been, nor ever will

will be, able to form any thing perfect; and the nearer any system approximates to this summit of excellence, the more quickly, through the depravity of human nature, is it subject to deterioration and decay. But most certainly this cannot arise from our constitution itself, a constitution formed, not by the hasty effusions of a disaffected party, deceived by abstract speculations, and heated with contending passions, and therefore in continual revolution; but by the united wisdom of the best of men, in different ages, following the footsteps of their predecessors with cautious attention, not jealous of their excellencies, but rectifying their mistakes. Hence has been laid a stable ground of good government, never to be amended in its principles, and requiring only care, watchfulness, and integrity, to preserve its original energies.

However, then, we may not altogether agree amongst ourselves on trivial questions of party politics, surely there is nothing, as yet, that ought to wean the heart of a wise and good man from his native land. Every motive concurs and induces us to unite against an external foe, that threatens the destruction of the whole; and to employ our united exertions in maintaining and securing our privileges and enjoyments as a highly favoured people: or, in the language of our text, “to be of good courage, and play the men for our people.”

But we see here another motive for their exertions, which I conceive will be found equally applicable to

us. Not only do we discern their PATRIOTISM, but their RELIGION ; not only the love of their country, but their love of God. In the issue of this contest was involved,

Secondly, The cities of their God. There is something peculiar in the term, let us pay a little attention to its import. Israel was then the peculiar people of God ; in their cities alone his name was known and magnified, his worship cultivated and preserved : there the glorious salvation of Messiah was alone recorded, exhibited in types and figures of divine appointment, while the expectation of his personal appearance enlivened their prospects, and the believing exercise of their religious rites brought the happy enjoyment of his salvation to their hearts. The exclusive privilege of being the people of God we claim not, and God forbid we should ever wish to claim it. O that the gospel of his salvation was known from shore to shore, from one end of the earth unto another ! Soon should we see an end of all those private broils, or public commotions, those wars and tumults, that disturb the order of the world. Soon would its happy effects proclaim its divine original and spiritual efficacy, and peace in every heart, diffusing itself through every society, would thence extend itself throughout all the earth, till the happy times arrived, when “ they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks ; nation shall no more rise up against nation, and men learn war

war no more." Such expectations we are taught to form of times laid up in the purposes of God, the prospect cheers the drooping spirits, and faith exclaims, "The Lord hasten it in his time." But, if we claim not the exclusive privilege, the privilege itself is the glory and happiness of this long favoured land. And to believe the truth of God, to know, enjoy, and be thankful for, such inestimable blessings, will constitute our strongest security. When the Psalmist is enumerating the mercies of God to his ancient people, by a beautiful gradation he rises from the blessings of providence to the blessings of grace; and, tracing the various steps of divine beneficence, ascends the sacred summit, to lay the top-stone of this temple of praise in adoration for the discoveries of his sacred truth. "He sheweth his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel. He hath not dealt so with any nation: and as for his judgments, they have not known them. Praise ye the Lord." Pf. cxlvii. 19, 20.

Here permit me to rejoice, yea I am confident that you will rejoice with me, in the privileges we possess, and the support and confirmation we derive to the fundamental truths of the glorious gospel, from the concurrence of our happy establishment. To me it appears a cause of the greatest gratitude and thankfulness, that the interest of true religion, and the defence of the purest system of gospel truth, is under the care and patronage of the government of these lands. And, allow me to say, if all its ministers

nifters firmly believed the doctrines they profefs, experienced their vital influence, and faithfully declared their truth, not a fecret corner of this ifland but muft be enlightened with its rays, and (we might then reasonably expect) be influenced by its power. But, if we are compelled to lament, that too too many do neither, I know no remedy, my chriitian brethren, but earneftly to fupplicate the great Head of the church to pour out more abundantly of his Spirit upon us, and to make us confiftent with ourfelves.

Yea, I cannot but rejoice, in the principles of *universal toleration*, which are fo happily confirmed amongft us. Such are the peculiar privileges of this people, that, whatever views a man may entertain, and however he may differ from us, he knows no reftRAINT upon his liberties, but, according to the dictates of his confcience, and his own views of truth, he worships the Lord his God. And abundant reafons have fuch to congratulate themfelves on a fituation, where, if they have not the arm of authority on their fide, they have the arm of protection for their defence; if they have not the honour of an eftablifhment, they have the full eft exercife of their religious liberties.

While, then, the truth of God obtains in thefe kingdoms the advantage of an eftablifhment, (an advantage, the effects of which are even felt by thofe of evangelical fentiments without its pale) and it muft be either through the deviating principles, or remiffnefs, of its minifters, if they are not honoured as almoft the only meffengers of its mercy
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and its grace, I cannot but go a step further, and rejoice that, in some way or other, in the various modes, and different denominations of professing christians, its important message is founded through the land, and becomes "the power of God unto salvation to all them that believe." "Thereby Christ is preached, and therein (after one of the best examples) I do rejoice, yea, and I will rejoice." Phil. i. 18.

If, then, "the cities of our God" are the places where his name is known, his worship maintained, and his salvation experienced, have we not the same incitement, whatever denomination of professing christians we may have chosen to unite with, to exercise the most perfect unanimity, the most ardent zeal, and unabating courage, in our patriotic exertions for the salvation of our country?

But here suffer me, my brethren, when I affirm, that to know the value of the gospel we must understand it; to know the inestimable excellency of its blessings, we must have the vital experience of them in the heart. And in this I shall address myself with peculiar advantage to those who are the happy subjects of its grace. You know, by experience, that nothing can bear a comparison with its importance, either for individual consolation, or national benefit. And let it not then be thought a digression from my present purpose if, for the direction and incitement of some to seek after it, and to promote the gratitude

tude and zeal of those acquainted with its blessings, I dwell a little on its nature and design.

Wherever we look all around us, and view the world as it is, we meet with undeniable proofs that the state of man is a state of sin and misery. Man knows and feels within himself, whatever earthly advantages he may possess, under whatever happy state of society or civil government he may be cast, there is a fatal something that impresses on his mind the ideas of guilt and of want. Hence that dissatisfaction and restlessness of spirit in the pursuits of business and of pleasure; and from the same source, though more perniciously directed, that dissatisfaction with the established forms of government, and restless desire of novelty and innovation. A temper which nothing can so allay, in any of its exercises, as the experimental knowledge of the gospel truth, and the realizing views of those spiritual blessings and eternal glories which fill and enlarge the minds of true believers. Under this view of existing circumstances the word of God proposes itself as a remedy for the sinful and miserable state of man. And, while discovering our true condition, and exposing to our view the alarming situation in which sin has involved us all, it shews us a way of return to God, lays a sure foundation for reconciliation, acceptance, and favour, and thus not only encourages our hopes, but establishes a believing confidence, grounded upon divine testimony and promises, of spiritual and eternal blessings.

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Surely it cannot but be a question of very serious aspect to a guilty sinner, "wherewith shall I come before the Lord?" No question of a political nature, however intimately the welfare of individuals or of society may be involved in its solution, can at all compare with its importance. Though men, occupied most zealously in the affairs of this life, may, and do, alas too often, trifle with their souls and eternity, yet, as the concern itself is most interesting, such it begins to appear when the mind is first enlightened by the Spirit of grace. No happiness can then be entertained in the soul that knows not a sure and faithful answer to this important inquiry, and no where can an answer be obtained but in the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Here we have the answer of God; a stable ground of dependence; a certain confidence, when we come for the pardon of our sins, the justification of our persons, the acceptance of our services, the enjoyments of grace and favour, the communication of spiritual strength, and every promised blessing. "We come to a throne of grace assured of obtaining mercy to pardon, and grace to help in every time of need."

The church of God is to be the faithful depository, the constant witness, or, as the apostle expresses it, "the pillar and the ground, of truth." It is the design of God, in constituting a standing ministry, that his servants should sound the trumpet of the everlasting gospel, that they who are ready to perish may come, believe, embrace, and be saved.

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While, therefore, we testify of the danger of man through sin, we proclaim a way of salvation, glorious to all the harmonizing perfections of the infinite and eternal JEHOVAH, suited to the helpless state of sinners, and thus satisfactory to the guilty and distressed conscience. We affirm, in concurrence with divine testimony, that "God hath laid in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation, he that believeth shall not be confounded." Is. xxviii. 16. 1 Pet. ii. 6. We say to the contrite spirit that "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from *all* sin," and direct him to that "Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." We point *him* out as "the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth," so that "they who believe are justified from *all things*, from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses:" now then, being "justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, have access into his grace, and stand therein, while we rejoice in hope of the glory of God." Rom. v. 1. And this supports and establishes the assurance of our faith, that "Jesus Christ is able (as he is willing) to save to the uttermost all who come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." Heb. vii. 25. What happy men, what a happy nation, what a happy world, should we behold, if every individual amongst us was a christian indeed; living in the enjoyment of gospel blessings, feeling the influence of its truths, manifesting the
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power of its grace, and practising its sacred dictates. Here only is the foundation of true peace in time and eternity, unshaken by all the convulsions of a changing world. And where the reasoning of the philosopher fails, and the argument of the moralist is in vain, the simple declaration of gospel truth impressed upon the heart by the Spirit of grace, while it brings the kindest consolation to the fearful and trembling mind, changes the corrupted nature, and produces a certain conformity to its design, the genuine obedience of faith and love, the practice of every christian grace and virtue to the glory of God our Saviour.

It must, then, be evident to a reflecting mind, that even the external knowledge and bare profession of christian truth cannot but be attended with many important advantages to society. But ye who have experienced its power, and tasted its blessedness, discern more clearly the inestimable value of such a privilege. Without this, you had yet been in the darkness of sin, walking in the ways of death, “ vessels of *wrath* fitted for destruction:” but now, enlightened by its truth, and quickened by its spirit, ye are become the vessels of mercy, “ waiting for the *grace* that is to be brought unto us at the revelation of Jesus Christ.”

Here a door of hope and consolation opens to the anxious mind, with whatever trials, domestic or public, it may be encircled. The rays of this divine truth dissipate the clouds of darkness and doubtful

solicitude, while beyond opens the prospect of life and immortality.

Hence it arises that a true believer so values his christian privileges above all besides; and, sensible of his state of guilt, darkness, and danger, when destitute of gospel light and grace, like the inspired apostle, he will as sincerely “account all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus his Lord, estimating them but as the vilest refuse so that he may win Christ, and be found in him, not having on his own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.” Phil. iii. 8. A christian, therefore, cannot value his country, with all its endearments, if the religion of his country, the interest of gospel truth, be discountenanced or destroyed. And this lesson he has learnt from the precepts of his divine master, who has taught him that serious truth, “that if any man love father or mother, wife or children, houses or lands, more than him, he is not worthy to be called his disciple.” Compare Matt. x. 37. and xix. 29. When, therefore, the God of Israel was about to pronounce the most awful denunciation upon his once favoured people, it is the withdrawal, not so much of their temporal advantages, as of their religious privileges. “Behold the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord. And they shall wander from sea

sea to sea, and from the north even to the east : they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it." Amos viii. 11, 12. What a piercing reflection to a pious mind ! Realize for a moment with serious consideration the affecting state. The houses of your God shut up ;—the hostile bands guarding their once delightful doors ;—your returning sabbaths changed for the decads of infidelity ;—their consecrated seasons profaned by authority ;—their solemn duties discountenanced, if not proscribed ;—your ministers prohibited their sacred functions, or their expressions watched with malignant care ;—and all your holy exercises, once so pleasing in their prospect, so reviving in their enjoyment, embittered by solicitude, or totally destroyed.

But, it may anxiously be asked, are we exposed to scenes like these ? are we in danger of such enormities ? It is this view, I must confess, which particularly engages my attention, induces my present exertions, and justifies them, I trust, from this place. And, if only the possibility exist of such destructive inroads, it ought to lead those to a little more serious reflection, who profess, under any denomination, to value their christian privileges, but are unconcerned and uninfluenced with the thought of our surrounding dangers.

Let any one look upon the avowed principles and acknowledged character of our enemies, and say, what we may justly expect if overrun by the threatening foe. Let us here learn to profit by the ex-

ample of others, once deluded by their deceitful friendship, and now influenced and guarded by their powerful arms. Vices almost unknown, or suppressed before, the effects of unprincipled infidelity, are now stalking unabashed, and unrestrained. Religion, if not destroyed, is publicly discountenanced, and (if I am rightly informed) the number of its professors are miserably decreased, while the fashion of infidelity has precipitated into its vortex all who possessed not something more than a popular profession. Would it not operate the same with us? If the strong hand of power were not exerted to suppress the exercises of our religion, would there not be all the discouragement of authority, all the influence of prevailing custom, united with the secret and subtle efforts of infidelity? How long think ye that in such circumstances, without the miraculous interposition of Almighty power, our religious ordinances, in any denomination of professing christians, could stand uninjured? How long think ye that the church of God could remain undisturbed by persecution? At best we must run a most alarming hazard. And if any one can think that our religious concerns can be safe in the hands, and under the control, of avowed infidels, I confess he has a faith of a nature very different from mine. God, I know, will have a church in the world to the end of time, and firmly I believe his own declaration, that the "gates of hell shall not prevail against it." But, let it be remembered, it is by no means necessary
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that his church should be dignified with honours, encircled with prosperity, or even possess the favourable opinion of mankind. That church may be low and mean; it may be called to assimilate itself to the humble character of its Saviour and its Lord; like him "to endure the contradiction of sinners;" to be "persecuted, if not destroyed." Yet, in the meanwhile, we cannot but prefer the anxious prayer, the Lord keep Britain from this "hour of temptation," and guard his churches from so "fiery a trial", lest our faith be found too weak for its assault. And, though our hopes may stand firm in the expectation of his promised grace, viewing only the possibility of such an occurrence, we have every reason, yea, it is our indispensable duty, to exercise in ourselves, and to excite in others, the sentiments of our text. "Be of good courage, and let us play the men for our people, and for the cities of our God:—and the Lord do that which seemeth him good." This leads us to consider,

II. The duties of a faithful people in the time of alarm and danger.

In this our text affords us direction suitable to the present occasion. To exert every power, and unite in those exertions, acknowledging that salvation is of God, and leaving the event in his righteous hand.

In the character before us we discover the genuine
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spirit of christian heroism ; a determined magnanimity, and yet settled resignation—we observe the display of true courage ; not fearful of the event, but earnest in the means to secure a prosperous issue. In a former part of the sacred history, we find the Israelites in a similar situation, from the same invading enemy, and exercising the same disposition of fortitude and submission. “ And the children of Israel said unto the Lord, we have sinned, do *thou* unto us whatsoever seemeth good unto thee, deliver us only, we pray thee, this day.” Judges x. 15, &c. What is this but to acknowledge the justice of his judgments while hoping in his mercy ; in the spirit of the royal Psalmist, when perplexed to choose in the distressing proposal of divine corrections, “ Let us fall now into the hands of the Lord (for his mercies are great), and let me not fall into the hands of men.” 2 Sam. xxiv. 14. A language, I conceive, in which each of us are ready to join, in difficulties of a similar concern.

To resign ourselves into the hand of God is a duty which, in all situations, we owe to him, when considering him as the sovereign creator, and the wise and righteous disposer of all events. But, when we review the sins of a guilty nation, the many provocations which a righteous God has long endured with patient forbearance ; the various vices of every order in society ; the pride, the luxury, the intemperance, the false and profane swearing, and especially the scenes of gaming, and adultery, that, notwithstanding

withstanding the rigid hand of justice exerted to check their growing influence, have lately so increased among us:—when, moreover, we reflect upon the contempt of our christian privileges; that neglect of the word of God, that rejection of its truths by the reasoning pride of human wisdom, that consequent inattention to the christian sabbath, devoted by too many to business, to pleasure, or to dissipation; so common in a christian land; surely it becomes us, in the spirit of unfeigned humiliation, to justify the righteous judgments of the Lord. We have every reason to join the language of a pious prophet, “O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us confusion of faces, &c. to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against thee; to the Lord our God belong mercies and forgivenesses, though we have rebelled against him, neither have we obeyed the voice of the Lord our God, to walk in his laws which he set before us, &c.” Dan. ix. 7—10. Impressed with such views as these, it becomes us to lie submissive in the hands of God, with the language of the text upon our lips, “the Lord do that which seemeth him good.” But, while acknowledging our deserts, yet preferring our earnest supplications, and hoping in his mercy, herein consists the exertion of true courage, and genuine patriotism, to unite in every desirable mean of protection and defence, to secure a happy issue of a perplexing and unhappy contest.

To this object we are now ultimately to recall your attention.

We are now, confessedly on all sides, as a nation, in a most important and critical situation ; a situation unparalleled in the annals of British history. Whatever jarring opinions we may form upon different questions of political influence, whatever views we may have entertained of the war, as to the justice of its origin—the varied designs of contending parties—the propriety or necessity of its continuance—or the opportunities that have offered themselves for its termination—the time for agitating these questions is now past. All these are now lost in one great question, whether we shall continue to exist as an independent nation—whether, therefore, we shall maintain our religion, defend our commerce, and enjoy our property, or submit to an enraged foe, proclaiming in the face of the whole world, that *our political existence is incompatible with theirs.*

It never has been my wish to introduce any question of politics, or party interest, into this sacred place. But the present posture of affairs cannot but excite the attention of every one ; the present times must call forth every friend to true religion, and the order of civil government, to declare his principles and decide upon his line of conduct. And surely it cannot have become a question of party whether we shall yet value our nearest relatives, defend our most important interests, or maintain to ourselves the possession

session of our liberties and our rights? Yet convinced I am that all of these depend upon the issue of the present contest. All our rights, all our liberties, are at stake, and who then shall not be solicitous for the event?

And here I cannot avoid calling your peculiar attention to one circumstance, as it impresses my mind in the most interesting manner, and will at the same time, I trust, convince some, how fallacious the idea, that the poor might possibly be bettered by *any* change, or at most can have little to concern themselves with as to the event. If it should be so, that, in the providence of God, our enemies are permitted to prevail against us in their threatened attack, what must become of all those *public charities* the glory and the boast of the British nation, so peculiarly its own, and the happy asylums of the various objects of misery and distress? Is it to be supposed that the ferocious hand of conquest, intent on plunder, will spare their sacred funds, that every where besides has treated nothing as sacred? Or, when the hostile arms of an invading foe have realized amongst us the once delightful though deceitful dreams of *liberty and equality*, who then will be found by liberal subscription to support those munificent institutions, when all are equally poor, all are equally miserable? If this be, as it appears to my mind, the natural consequence of such success, and not the illusion of an imaginary danger, it proves that all, from the
highest

highest to the lowest, are most intimately concerned in present affairs, and called to every suitable exertion to promote the safety of the whole. Yea, let it be remembered that, when every present bond of society is broken, what may next be introduced is beyond the foresight of the wisest speculatist to conjecture.—In the present temper of our enemies we may rest confident of the first, and therefore must either be prepared for defence, or to surrender our dearest securities, in anxious suspense of what may be the result. We have every reason to apprehend the worst, to fear the loss of every enjoyment, at least of their security, and above all of our religious privileges and rights. And hence I cannot but conceive, that upon the issue of this controversy depends the exercise of the Christian ministry, with all its important effects; and therefore my ministerial existence amongst you, if not my existence at all.

PEACE I wish with all my heart, and I doubt not it is the anxious wish of every one here present.—But surely he cannot be considered as an enemy to peace, who determines to defend his habitation from the band of midnight robbers, proclaiming beforehand their resolution not only to plunder but destroy? Such I conceive to be the existing situation of this country. If any opportunities have offered to conclude a stable peace, certainly it is not so now: or, could I have entertained

tertained such an idea, most surely I had not appeared in this place, on an occasion like the present.

If we are to believe the declarations of our enemies, the most alarming purposes are in agitation; and, whether those declarations be true or false, it is our only safety, and therefore our truest wisdom, to be guarded against the execution of designs so inveterate and malignant.

DIVIDE AND GOVERN has been the fixed maxim, and the subtle policy, of those with whom we contend. By this, rather than by open force, they have generally prevailed, and by this only, humanly speaking, they can ever hope to prevail against us. UNANIMITY, therefore, in the view of all parties, is most necessary for our preservation: and by no means can this unanimity be more clearly discovered, than by the present method of voluntary contribution towards the defence of our country. What then should be our language, each one to another, but the language of our text, "Be of good courage, and let us play the men." Let us exercise the wisdom of men; let us employ all the means of human prudence; let us unite in the undertaking as fellow men, a people united in the same privileges and laws; let us afford that mutual assistance which is required, according to our several abilities and situations, as those related by the nearest social bonds; let us act with the zeal and
courage

courage of men,—“and the Lord do that which seemeth him good.”

Without this, with what reflections should we meet any disastrous event, supposing, in the providence of God, such event should take place? How should we then accuse our supineness and incredulity as the great means of plunging us therein? But, while we are found employed in the utmost exertion of those abilities which have been liberally imparted for our defence, cheerfully may we confide in the GOD OF OUR SALVATION, and meet his providences with a suitable spirit, whether he call us to patient resignation, or to the exercises of gratitude and praise.

If then OUR POLITICAL EXISTENCE be menaced, and all our CHRISTIAN PRIVILEGES be dependent on the event, surely it is time to arise, to consider, to act. The unusual alarm should excite unusual exertions, and, whatever little differences may aforesime have divided us, the time of common danger is the time for union against a common foe. Every man at such a season has his peculiar duties. But let us not forget, if we act as men, our first duty is *to express our dependance upon God*, by prayer and supplication. And, if a spirit of prayer was more abundantly poured out upon those professing godliness, the prospect would appear more bright, and our hopes find a more secure reliance. Exercises of this nature we have lately been engaged in, and, I trust, that many have
been

been standing in the gap to turn away the indignation of a righteous God from an offending people. "The Lord hear the prayer of the remnant that are left." And, though we would neither undervalue nor neglect the means, still we must ever recollect that in his favour and protection we shall find security, more than in the courage of our fleets, or the valour of our arms. And, while justifying his righteous judgments, we may trust in his grace speedily to remove them.

Happy am I here to think that some of the brave defenders of our country know how to pray as well as to fight. Amongst which we cheerfully record the name of that brave officer whose victory we last celebrated with such deserved honours. When entering into the action from which he gathered such laurels for himself, and his country such security; in the awful moments of suspensive preparation, when cowards tremble, and even the wise and brave are serious, if I am rightly informed, calling his officers around him on the deck, he prostrated himself in their presence before the God of hosts, in language appropriate to so solemn an occasion, committing himself and them with the cause they maintained to his sovereign protection, his family to his care, his soul and body to the disposal of his providence, and then, rising from his knees, gave the word for the attack. What was this but to exemplify the spirit of our text, "Be of good courage, and let

us play the men for our people, and for the cities of our God: and the Lord do that which seemeth him good."

Having lately thus expressed our entire dependance on the Lord, now is the season for the exercise of human wisdom, the display of union, and the energy of preparation.

We may perhaps suspect whether our enemies design to realize their threats of an invasion; but, should they not, our zeal will not the less be honourable; and supposing they should, with all that immensity and vigour of preparation, I again repeat it, our only safety under God, and therefore our truest wisdom, is to stand prepared for the event. Yea, it is a duty which we owe to God, in gratitude for our abounding privileges; a duty we owe to that government under which we live in the peaceful enjoyment; to show ourselves sensible of their value, and zealous to maintain and preserve them.

It may be, the modesty of some may render them unwilling to be the objects of public notice, and here then the opportunity offers itself to such of performing their good works in secret. The small trifle that the ability of others may permit them to offer may appear to them unworthy of individual notice, and here then such may communicate, and gratify their loyalty while they consult the limit of their circumstances. Under this impression,

pression, I trust, not one amongst us will be found, who is not ready to discover his approbation of so important a design. In the issue of this contest we are all intimately concerned. If professing godliness, though of earthly treasures we may have none to lose, we have at stake interests infinitely more dear and valuable, and which alone can raise the mind in the troubles of life; and privileges which have often turned our sorrows into joy, and made us forget our miseries in the prospects of the world of glory. —Let such then recollect that the smallest donations, while they exhibit an equal attachment to so patriotic a design, by their numbers may become of essential value. But from those, whose abilities are more equal to their wishes, we trust to receive a correspondent proof of gratitude to God, and zeal for their country's welfare.

Here then I leave my subject, to the serious consideration and conviction of your minds: having discharged my own conscience of that important trust which I felt incumbent upon it. If I have in a measure deviated from my usual practice in this place, of simply declaring the important message of the gospel of Christ, I trust I have been engaged in exciting you to those exertions, on which, under God, my preaching and your continuing to hear and enjoy this gospel message depends. In this view I have been seriously persuaded of its importance; this view I have been principally labouring to
impress

impress upon your minds ; and, under its powerful influence, the language of our text seems to demand our serious attention, and returns with redoubled energy : “ Be of good courage, and let us play the men for our people, and for the cities of our God ;——and the Lord do that which seemeth him good.” Amen.

THE END.

THE GOD OF SALVATION.

A

SERMON,

PREACHED ON THE DAY OF

GENERAL THANKSGIVING,

DECEMBER 5, 1805,

AND IN AID OF THE

PATRIOTIC FUND, &c.

IN THE

Parish Church of St. Andrew Wardrobe, and
St. Ann, Blackfriars, London.

BY THE

Rev. WILLIAM GOODE, A.M.

RECTOR OF THE SAID CHURCH, AND LECTURER OF
ST. JOHN'S WAPPING, &c.

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1805.

A

S E R M O N, &c.

PSALM iii. 8.

SALVATION BELONGETH UNTO THE LORD, THY
BLESSING IS UPON THY PEOPLE.

THE Psalm, of which our text is the concluding part, was composed by David in a season of peculiar danger; and on an occasion most trying to his faith. It is entitled “ a Psalm of David, when he *fled* from his son Absalom.” He felt his situation, but he knew where to trust. His enemies were *many*, “ How are they increased (says he) which trouble me? many are they which rise up against me.”—They were *malicious*, desirous of destroying his hopes, and of discouraging his mind, “ Many there are which say of my soul there is no help for him in his God.”—They were *powerful* and *near*, they had “ set themselves against him round about.”—In the

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history

history of this event we are informed, that seeing his *sin* in his *punishment*, and convinced of the criminal cause of his suffering, he was affected with deep humiliation, and excited to patient resignation. Compare 2 Sam. xv. 14 to end, and xvi. 5, to end, with xii. 1 to 12. Here, however, we have a proof that though *distressed* he did not *despond*.—The prayer of faith had before brought deliverance, in the midst of trouble, therefore, he possesses that tranquillity which is peculiar to faith, “ I laid me down and slept, &c.” and faith thus encouraged presents again its confident supplication. (See ver. 3 to 7.)

The ground of his faith and hope was the sentiment of the text.—“ An acknowledgment which ought *always* to fill the heart, and *upon every proper occasion* to flow from the mouth of the Christian, viz. that salvation is not to be had from *man*, from the kings of the earth, or the gods of the heathen, from saints or angels, but from **JEHOVAH** alone, to whom alone therefore the glory should be ascribed. If *He will* save none *can* destroy, if *He will* destroy none *can* save.” (*Bishop Horne on the passage.*)

What occasion can be more proper than the present! Our situation, like that of the Psalmist, is both dangerous and trying. Our enemies, like his, are many and malicious, desirous of sinking us into despondency, with the insinuations of invincible power. Our sins afford cause for deep humiliation, and great fear.

Many a time has the Scourge of Europe stood
upon

upon the opposite shores, darting his envious and malignant eyes upon this happy land; longing for, and threatening its destruction.—Many a time we have been ready to apprehend that his attempts to accomplish these designs would have stained the intervening sea, or our own shores, with the blood of Britons: should it even please the Almighty, whose is the power and the victory, ultimately to disappoint his views.—God however has heard our prayer, He has been “a *shield* for us, our *glory* and the lifter up of our head. We cried unto the Lord with our voice, and he heard us out of his holy hill. We laid us down and slept, we waked for the Lord sustained us.”—(ver. 3, 4, 5.) Still He hath prolonged to us our prosperity and internal peace,—still we retain the quiet possession of all our civil and religious advantages. A merciful God has appeared for us by such interpositions as are evidently beyond the common course of events.—In circumstances, the principal bearing of which has been for our own protection and security, rather than for aggression upon the enemy, his help has always been seasonable and effectual.

We are now met to adore and worship Him, for a similar interposition in similar circumstances. A victory has been obtained which exceeds in its glory all the great achievements which have lately attracted our attention in the five preceding naval engagements of the last war; (See Appendix No. 1.) and which in its extent and effects stands *unparalleled in the annals of the world*. We admire, and

justly may, the skill and intrepidity of our officers and seamen ; but, in the present event, as it will appear by a consideration of facts, the hand of God has been most singularly displayed, arranging every circumstance, to give that skill and intrepidity their full effect.—We ascribe then the supreme glory to God ; we consider the event as an answer to the prayers of his people, and as an encouragement to continue therein with perseverance :—we humbly and thankfully receive it as a token for good, and adopt the language of faith and supplication, “ We will not be afraid for ten thousands of people who have set themselves against us round about. Arise, O Lord ; save us, O our God : for thou hast smitten all our enemies upon the cheek-bone ; thou hast broken the teeth of the ungodly. Salvation belongeth unto the Lord, thy blessing is upon thy people,” (ver. 6. to 8.)

It is no doubt the principal design of this day to adore the *God of Providence* ; let us however in this place never forget the *God of Grace*. We must not therefore omit to observe, that our text has a much more exalted signification than that to which we are now about to apply it.—There is a salvation of much more consequence than the temporal salvation of a nation, than the temporal salvation of all the nations of Europe, or the world itself. Yea one immortal soul is of more value than the temporal interest of ten thousand worlds. Connected with eternity, everlasting joy, or endless sorrow awaits it, when
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ten thousand worlds shall have finished their course, and be no more. Put together in one grand aggregate the space of existence of every individual who once inhabited them, a point will come in eternity when the duration of an immortal soul shall have exceeded the whole, and yet in comparison of the future it shall but just have begun to live.—Assuming the wonderful hypothesis that every fixed star in the firmament is but the centre of some other system, and that we are surrounded with these beyond number, still we might justly say with the poet,

“ Survey this midnight glory, worlds on worlds,
 “ Amazing pomp ! redouble that amaze,
 “ Ten thousand add, add twice ten thousand more,
 “ Then weigh the whole—one soul outweighs them all,
 “ And calls the astonishing magnificence
 “ Of unintelligent creation poor ! !”——

(YOUNG.)

Well might He say, who knew in its full extent the value of a soul, “ What will it profit a man if he should gain the whole world and lose his own soul, &c. !”

The state of this soul in man as a sinner is represented in the word of God as lost and perishing. This however, as it cannot imply annihilation, or the deprivation of its being, must refer to something still more awful and alarming ; the curse of the law—the displeasure of the holy lawgiver—the righteous indignation and wrath of God revealed in his word against all unrighteousness and ungodliness of men :

Rom. i. 18.—and ultimately “ the worm that dieth not and the fire which shall not be quenched.” But here “ Salvation is of the Lord.” The redemption of the soul is precious and it ceaseth for ever from man or angels. In the counsels of eternity “ HE laid help upon *One* that is mighty.” The plan originated in the sovereign grace of God. It was the *act*, the *infinite wisdom* of the ETERNAL JEHOVAH, Eph. i. 8. The GREAT GOD OUR SAVIOUR executed the amazing design and fulfilled the great mystery of godliness in his *condescension*, *sufferings*, and *victory*. Here we behold love most free, most undeserved, and most disinterested, beyond that of earthly patriots or conquerors.—Salvation cost him dear, that it might flow in all its blessings freely and fully to us, even the blood of his cross; when he gave himself not for his *friends*, not for his *country*, but for his *enemies*. GOD THE HOLY GHOST, disposes the heart, and brings it into the enjoyment of salvation.—“ Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but by his own mercy he saved us; by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour, &c.” Tit. iii. 4 to 7. Such a view of the state of a lost and perishing soul, and the method of its salvation, renders both most interesting; especially when we recollect, that “ there is salvation in no other, neither any other *name* under heaven whereby we must be saved:” Acts iv. 10. to 12. when, if
this

this Saviour be rejected “ there remaineth no other sacrifice for sins but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and of fiery indignation which shall devour the adversary.” Heb. x. 26, 27. Never would we appear in this place without reminding you of these things—without urging the sinner to flee from the wrath to come, “ and, for refuge, to lay hold of the hope of the Gospel.” Heb. vi. 18. As repentant sinners secure by faith an interest in the salvation of the Lord Jesus, then you may boldly and calmly meet all the revolutionary commotions of the world; then all the changes of earth shall ultimately effect your good, and “ work out for you a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.”—But, destitute of this, all earthly advantages, whether personal or political, can only issue in “ eternal destruction from the presence of the Lord,” at that most awful season, the final revolution of all things—when “ men shall cast their idols of silver and gold, which they made each one for himself to worship to the moles and to the bats; to go into the clefts of the rocks, and into the tops of the ragged rocks, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his Majesty when *He* ariseth to shake terribly the earth.” Is. ii. 20, 21.

Upon an occasion like the present, these cursory hints, though upon a subject so momentous, must suffice. Let it however be observed, that it is principally in reference to these things that the Christian values his national advantages.—Our civil privileges

are indeed great, superior to those of all surrounding nations, worthy of our veneration, our gratitude, our jealousy, and our defence. But it is the glory of Britain that to it in a peculiar sense belong the oracles of God, the ordinances and institutions of his worship, and the light of his salvation.—Connected with the enjoyment and the preservation of these, the Christian chiefly views the salvation of the nation.—These especially call forth his gratitude in recollecting the various interpositions of our God in national deliverances, from that memorable display of power and goodness, in defence of the reformation, the dispersion and destruction of the *Spanish Armada*, impiously called *Invincible*, to that which bears the greatest analogy to it in all the events of our history, and which now excites our gratitude, the late *Victory of Trafalgar*.

Here then let us fix our attention upon the particular circumstances, which have called us together into the house of God, to present the *thankful services* of this day.

It is the great peculiarity of Scripture, that it teaches us to view all things as in the hand of God. The oppressor and the oppressed are *His*. He giveth *victory* to kings—and “He hath created the *wasfer* to destroy.” 1s. liv. 16. Let this sentiment impress our minds, while we pursue the subject in a few reflections, arising from the interesting state in which the providence of God has at present placed us, together with the surrounding nations.

Whatever

Whatever differences of opinion may have existed as to the ground and necessity of the former war, there can be none I apprehend as to this—It is on all hands acknowledged that *We are at war because we cannot be at peace*—A boundless ambition, determined, if possible, to sway the sceptre of the world, which knows *no law* but the *law of power*, no *restraint* but the *want of power*, was watching our prosperity and endeavouring to aim a deeper blow in peace, than could reasonably be expected in the event of warfare.—The avowed design of the enemy has been, not our restraint within certain limits, under the pretence that we had unjustly passed them, but, *our destruction*: while on the other hand the professed, and I trust, the real object of our exertions has been not *aggression* but *preservation*.

The surrounding nations awoke from their torpor, have prepared to restrain the inordinate grasp of ambition; convinced that no security could be enjoyed by any, while predominant power was alone in the hands of one:—of one, who uniting country to country was still extending his projects and his efforts, as his former acquisitions appeared to be secured. What may be the counsel of the Lord, in these uncommon times, we know not.—Whether He may grant success against the common enemy, and turn (as he can in a moment when it pleases him) the tide of victory; or whether he designs to use his exorbitant power and ambition as the scourge of offending nations, are in his own hands. One observation,

vation, however, we would here make, without further comment, that, in concurrence with what has been apprehended by many serious observers, comparing the events of Providence with the prophetic Scriptures, to be the leading design of God in the present judgments—all the Catholic Powers upon the continent, and these *almost* exclusively, are now in the hands of the destroyer.

We have been watching, with solemn awe, the succession of victories, which with remarkable rapidity have outstript all calculation—which have excited the suspicion of treachery or infatuation, of want of interest in the common cause, if not of unskilfulness and cowardice in its defence. And, while we lament the miseries of those countries, which the desolating armies are permitted to traverse, with almost equally calamitous circumstances whether as friends or foes, surely in these we must discern fresh motives for our gratitude. The grounds of our thankfulness are thereby increased, for every providential interposition in our favour, and especially the last; which so tends to restrain and limit the power of the enemy, and to cut off the facilities of turning that power against ourselves.

These views, combining with the singular circumstances of the late naval victory, shew us that it is *no common occasion* which now claims our attention, and demands our praise. It is indeed the peculiar excellence of Christianity that it teaches us the milder virtues of patience and forbearance, while it condemns the heroic pride and brutal courage, which,
though

though shining in the page of history, have been and still are the sources of numberless miseries to mankind. “ I say unto you, (says the great Teacher of christian morals) resist not evil”—“ To him who smiteth thee on the one cheek turn the other also.”—“ Do good to them that hate you,” &c. These however are evidently personal precepts enforcing “ personal duties from personal motives.” While exercising these Christian tempers in their individual concerns, the soldier may draw his sword, or the sailor may point his destructive battery against the enemies of his country, in his country’s cause, and be guiltless—yea commendable. We also may yet admire their intrepidity and courage.—That bravery and mercy, fortitude and compassion are not incompatible, the conduct of a British admiral has recently proved. The striking contrast to that ferocious spirit which in too many instances has actuated our enemies. (See Appendix, No. 2.)

In the present instance, we most evidently discern the providence of God inciting the skill and valour of man, and interposing at every needful juncture to render them effectual.—The detail of a few of the leading circumstances will prove the truth of this interesting observation. Whether from being pressed for necessary supplies as has been conjectured; or from the wise disposal of the blockading squadron, which concealed its force; or from some other unknown cause—the enemy at last were emboldened to put to sea.—And yet there appears to have been, from many circumstances, an unwillingness to venture
from

from a friendly port, till our force was too much weakened, as they supposed, by a detachment sent on some other service, to make an attack.—In the interval however, contrary to their expectations, by the vigilance of our naval department at home, in sending out every ship as quickly as it could be prepared for service, four out of the seven thus disposed of had been replaced. (See Appendix, No. 3.)

The method of attack was altogether new, and unexpected. Such plans, though apparently simple when made known, are the effects of peculiar genius. In the present instance, the design could only have been conceived by one whom God had endued with extraordinary talent in his profession. When first disclosed to the captains of the fleet, it appeared to them, other things concurring, and under the blessing of the Almighty, to insure success.

It must still more excite our admiration and our gratitude, if we consider the inequality of *number* and of *force*. The enemy possessed six ships of the line, with nearly 500 guns, and upwards of 8000 men more than those to whom they were opposed, and yet the result has been, such as History never yet recorded—nineteen of their ships were taken and destroyed! And, to complete the triumph, four which had escaped by flight were afterwards captured by an equal number of British ships, a circumstance equally unprecedented!—Most of the remaining vessels, three only excepted, have been rendered unserviceable, either by the effect of the engagement, or the violence of the subsequent storm;
while

while not one of ours, has been by them either taken or destroyed !

The timing of the storm also was most peculiarly and decidedly providential. During the engagement such a calm prevailed, as rendered every plan, which wisdom had laid, and every effort of skill and courage, effectual. But scarcely was the victory obtained, when He, whom the stormy winds and raging seas obey, gave them his commission, and excited them into a tempest, which continued in tremendous gales for several days. This circumstance has occasioned the destruction of all, except four, of the captured ships, and put the courage and skill of our sailors to an unexpected and laborious exertion. But amidst such dangers also not one of our ships has been lost !!!—Can we then, with the credulity of infidelity, suppose that the hand of the Lord was not in all this ? Had the storm been sent forth but a few hours sooner, it had prevented the engagement, and left the power of the enemy intire. In such circumstances, or had an equal number of our ships been captured, in the present state of Europe, what might not have been our fears ? Such a fleet might have been reserved to cover an invading army, to administer to us that cup of miseries, of which others are made to drink so deeply.

The security which a gracious God by these means has added, notwithstanding the continental successes, to our internal peace, is incalculably great. Upon the whole, twenty-five ships of the
line,

line, with about 20,000 seamen, have been lost to the enemy, and ten ships added to our navy ; and an equal number, otherwise to have been employed in blockading some hostile port, is set at liberty to surround and guard our own coasts.

It cannot also but arrest our attention, that on the very same day, if not at the same time, when the insulting conqueror was boasting his determination to root out our prosperity, and to extend his own *naval powers*, his *colonies* and *commerce*, by the destruction of ours, he was losing the very means of effecting his purposes. Here then let us stand and admire the hand of God, “ all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment, and those who walk in pride he is able to abase.” Dan. iv. 37.

The public joy has however suffered a sensible abatement by the loss of one, whose name must ever be dear to his country, as it has been a terror to its enemies ; and who deserves all that a grateful people can render, to unrivalled merit in his profession, and integrity and disinterestedness in the conduct of professional duties. The tears of his country, without one exception of rank or condition, have anticipated those honors, while they checked the usual exhibitions of joy on such an occasion : a custom justly accounted in the present instance, “ more honored in the breach than in the observance.”

The talent, however, and the success of such men are from God. “ If Naaman, the captain of the host of the King of Syria, be a great man with his
master

master and honorable, it is because by him *the Lord* hath given deliverance unto Syria." 2 Kings v. 1. But in this view they are a blessing *from Him* to a nation while they live, and a public loss when they die. They claim indeed our regret, but the Lord still more forcibly claims our submission. Had it been otherwise, in the tendency of human nature to earthly dependances, we might, perhaps, have turned our eyes from God to *man*;—we might have forgotten HIM in the *Instrument*;—we might have rested our future confidence on an arm of flesh and not on the Lord;—we might have been guilty of such pride as is most offensive to that God, to whom alone belongeth, and who alone will have the honor of, *Salvation*. The fact itself becomes still more striking, and the language of such a dispensation still more remarkable, by considering, that the English nation never before lost the commanding Admiral of a Fleet in any naval engagement. The voice of such a Providence says loudly—"Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils, for wherein is he to be accounted of!"—"It is better to trust in the Lord than to put any confidence in man." Pf. cxviii. 8, 9. "Blessed is he only who hath the God of Jacob for his help, and whose hope is in the Lord his God; who made heaven and earth, the sea and all that therein is; &c." Pf. cxlvi. 5 to 7.

Here also we may be permitted to notice with peculiar satisfaction, that spirit of religious dependence and acknowledgment of God, which attended
the

the communication of the intelligence. We reverence those whose minds could feel, and whose pious fear led them to express sentiments so becoming. May our God always give us in high situations, and at the head of the several departments, men of known and respected piety. The weight and influence of such characters will often infuse, draw forth, and especially encourage, those acknowledgments of God, which, as we have seen in former instances, produce a most powerful effect upon the nation at large. Such a spirit generally prevailing would indeed be a token for good. It is the revealed rule of the divine administration, "Those who honor me I will honor." And the outward professions of a nation in dependance and thankfulness shall not be disregarded, especially when united with those of many whose hearts are right with God.

Review, my Christian brethren, these circumstances which we have now concisely detailed, and you will surely be ready to say with me, it is no common occasion which has called us together this morning.—The nature, the circumstances, the seasonableness, the consequences, of the victory are such, as most clearly mark out the hand of God, and claim our peculiar admiration and gratitude. The influence indeed which it ought to have upon our minds is extensive, if we would meet it with a becoming temper, and render to the Lord according to his mercies.

The

The goodness of our God should lead us to *repentance*. Let us not be of those whom neither judgments nor mercies will humble, lest our mercies should but aggravate a quickly approaching destruction. Let us not be of those who “when the hand of the Lord is stretched out will not see,” lest he should say, “They *shall* see and be confounded. *Is.* xxvi. 11. Let our minds be deeply impressed with the ingratitude of forgetting the God of our tender mercies. His providences seem yet to recal us to his footstool—“Turn ye, turn ye, who knows but the Lord may turn and repent him” of the impending storm, when thus, from time to time, He is warding off its approach.

The aspect of such a dispensation of mercy affords encouragement to *Faith* and *Hope*.

He, who has placed the watery bulwark around our coasts, has manifestly blessed every attempt to defend them. In every effort which related to our own protection, success has crowned our exertions. May we not then trust, that, so far at least, the Lord is on our side, while the issue of every such conflict bids us, “*Fear not.*” Hence the *Prayer of Faith* should be excited and encouraged. While we have been stretching forth our hands in humble, fervent supplication, the Lord hath evidently been stretching out His arm of power for our protection. He hath endowed our commanders with wisdom and skill, our sailors with intrepidity and courage, and has rewarded their exertions with victory. If we

have prayed in faith, can we doubt, or can we fail to acknowledge, that herein we have had the answer of our prayers? and shall not a gracious answer encourage us to “ continue in prayer, and to watch in the same with thanksgiving?” We may yet again leave our prayers with Him in hope, and “ patiently wait for the Lord.”

In the subjects of this day’s consideration we have the most potent grounds of *thankfulness*.

When we reflect on the miseries which they are now enduring, who inhabit the seat of war, where the sword is unsheathed, and the destroying armies are passing to and fro, we cannot but bless God that we are so far removed from the turbulent and anxious scenes. (See App. No. 4.) We enjoy also with redoubled satisfaction and thankfulness the quiet of our native land. But, when we remember that it is only by such interpositions of a merciful God, in blessing the skill and exertions of our victorious fleets, that our deliverance has been wrought, or our prosperity and peace prolonged, how can we repress the overflowings of thankfulness and praise?

The circumstances which have now passed under our review should, in the last place, excite our *gratitude* to God, and to the intrepid defenders of their country’s cause. The one I apprehend will, upon the present occasion, be best expressed by the other.

A Fund is about to be formed for the relief of the sufferers in the late arduous conflict, connected with

with the *Patriotic Fund* already established for similar purposes; and it is with peculiar satisfaction that I direct your attention to so laudable a design. I solicit you to an *Act of Gratitude* to God, and to the courage and obedience of the British Navy; an *Act of Justice* to the brave men who are suffering under their wounds, or who have fallen in the defence of their country; an *Act of Compassion* to the widows and the fatherless who are thereby left destitute and defenceless; an *Act of Liberality* worthy of the British people, and which may wipe off a stain which has long rested on the character of their compassion.

Oh that I possessed the voice of persuasion, and on an occasion like this I would strive to exert its influence.—But why should I wish it? Facts have already spoken loudly, and made, I doubt not, a deep impression on your hearts. You are come together this morning already disposed to those sentiments, which a grateful people ought to feel towards that God who giveth us the victory, and towards those who have ventured their all in our defence, and lost their earthly all in the arduous conflict. Who are they whose cause I am to plead? The wounded and the disabled *soldier* or *sailor*—the afflicted and the weeping *widow*—the destitute and the defenceless *orphan*—And of whom? Of those, by whose exertions under God, we are indebted for the continuance of all our privileges, civil or religious—that we are now peaceably as-

fembled in the house of God—that we sit under our own vine, and under our own fig-tree, none daring to make us afraid—that we lie down and take our rest, and rise up again in safety. Let then their future exertions be animated by the reflection, that, while they are venturing their lives in the high places of the field, or on the deep places of the turbulent ocean, while they are exposing their families to bereavement in fighting for their country, their country is not forgetful of them, but is preparing for the comfortable subsistence of those who, in the event of war, may be left destitute by their virtuous ardour.

Alas! we sit by our fire-side, and talk of wars,—of the wounded,—and the dying—but how little can we conceive of those awful scenes, where death is dealing his arrows all around, and where every moment is fatal to numbers. Let those then who venture such trying enterprizes, whose experienced courage again and again repeats the desperate hazard, be dear to those who sit at home, and enjoy ease and security through their dangers and exertions. Shall we think it hard, shall we call it an exercise of compassion, shall we not rather esteem it an act of imperious justice, to meet, to the utmost of our abilities, the calls of their weeping families, when they thus solicit our help?

Let us for a moment realize the scene—let us think we hear the dreadful note, or rather feel the solemn silence, of preparation. The enemy is in
fight

fight—the decks are cleared for action—the fatal instruments of destruction are prepared—the apparatus is adjusted for the wounded or the dying—expectation is silent,—till with an intrepid and undaunted zeal the enemy is closed with, and the brave sailor rushes into action unknowing whether he may survive or fall in the moment of victory. Oh thou God of all power and might cover their heads in the day of battle. At this season the sharpened courage feels no dread—Oh happy is it, if that Christian courage then supports the mind, which, confident in the providential care of a reconciled covenant God in Christ Jesus, looks forward also with a well grounded assurance, in all events, of felicity in a better world beyond the grave! How important are the principles, the influence, and the hopes, of true Christianity, to those who carry their lives in their hand, and rush into such dangerous scenes!! (See App. No. 5.)

But, in the suspensive moments of expectation, when the thoughts *will* pass and repass involuntarily to those objects which are most dear, would it not repress the ardour of your zeal to reflect, that possibly the beloved partner of your sorrows and your joys, with your unconscious infant offspring, may, as the result of your exertions in your country's defence, be left themselves defenceless and destitute?—that those dear objects of your affections may be deprived of their only supporter, may be left to the casual contributions of the humane, or perhaps

perhaps to the scanty allowance of a parish? perhaps to endure the negligence and ingratitude of the thoughtless and hard hearted, who have themselves neither courage to defend, nor virtue to love the defenders of their country?

How would such apprehensions be relieved by the prospect of the generous help, which a fund constituted like this will afford? At a season so eventful, when God only knows *how often, when, and where*, the dreadful conflict may be renewed, it cannot be too liberally supported, too greatly accumulated, too far extended, when secured in its application. It is a tribute due both to God and to them. While the knowledge of this will tend greatly to clear away the anxieties of the feeling heart, and give room for the expanding courage, nothing can so justly claim, and nothing perhaps *has had* a greater influence to insure, in those who have survived such conflicts, (and who, whatever their faults may be, have minds proverbial for generosity) *Loyalty* to their *King*—*Obedience* to their *superiors*—*Love* to their *country*—and *ardour* in its *cause*.

Let then your liberal donations this day, say to the wounded, the widow, and the orphan, *Weep not*. You are indeed destitute and afflicted, but your country feels your sorrows, which you endure on its account—It honors the memory of those you lament—It cannot indeed restore your loss, but it can relieve your distresses, and what it *can* it *will*.

Here then, my Christian brethren, you have the
opportunity

opportunity of exercising the most devout gratitude, and the purest patriotism—of uniting gratitude to God, with benevolence to man. At these doors you may enlarge your contributions free from the charge or the suspicion of ostentation ; or you may give your mite, if not able to give more, without the fear of contempt. On such an occasion, no one who feels grateful to the God of victory—who values the privileges and liberties of the nation,—or who sympathizes with the afflicted sufferers,—will pass without contributing his grateful offering—without exerting the utmost of his abilities, in doing his duty towards those who, in the day of battle, have not disappointed their country's expectations. (See App. No. 6.)

God grant, that in the present eventful period, we may never want such men, endued with wisdom and fortitude, to surround our shores. Let us reward their ardour, encourage their exertions, and then rest alone on the “ GOD of SALVATION.” Humble for our provocations, turning to the Lord in repentance and newness of life, and hoping in his mercy, let us present and continue to present the prayer of faith, encouraged by his wonderful and repeated interpositions in answer to our supplication. The event is in his hands, whose past mercies have been great—and who, as *He* hath delivered, we trust, will yet deliver, his people.

PRAYER.

P R A Y E R.

“ While therefore, O Almighty God, we bear in our remembrance the skill and intrepidity of those who fight our battles, we confess that they are but instruments in thy hands, and that thou dost direct them according to the unsearchable purposes of thy will. The wisdom and the strength of man are thine. The winds and the waves are obedient to thy voice. Through *Thee* we have done great acts. Thou hast shewn us wonderful things in thy righteousness. Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty; for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine. Thine is the kingdom, O Lord, let thy blessing fall be upon thy people, and Thou shalt be exalted as Head above all.” *Amen.*

APPENDIX.

No. 1.

'The Victory of June 1st,	under Lord HOWE,
of <i>St. Vincent</i> ,	under Lord ST. VINCENT,
of <i>Camperdown</i> ,	under Lord DUNCAN,
of the <i>Nile</i> , and	} under Lord NELSON,
of <i>Copenhagen</i> ,	
of <i>Trafalgar</i> ,	under Lord NELSON,
with the capture of four ships,	} under Admiral Sir R. STRACHAN.
completing the destruction of	
the same fleet,	

No. 2.

This will be strikingly illustrated by comparing the letters of Lord Collingwood, for the relief of the wounded, with the conduct of the French; who fired upon the Spanish ships after they had struck, and destroyed many of their men, as they themselves were escaping.

Extract of a Letter from Vice Admiral Lord Collingwood, to William Marsden, Esq. dated on board His Majesty's ship the Queen, off Cape Trafalgar, Nov. 4, 1805.

“ SIR,

“ In clearing the captured ships of prisoners, I found so many wounded men, that to alleviate human misery as much as was in my power, I sent to the Marquis de Solana, Governor-General of Andalusia, to offer him the wounded to the care of their country, on receipts being given: a proposal which was received with the greatest thankfulness, not only by the Governor, but the whole country resounds with expressions of gratitude. Two French frigates were sent out to receive them, with a proper officer to give receipts: bringing with them all the English who had been wrecked in several of the ships, and an offer from the Marquis de Solana of the use of their hospitals for our wounded; pledging the honour of Spain for their being carefully attended.

“ I have ordered most of the Spanish prisoners to be released: the officers on parole; the men for receipts given, and a condition, that they do not serve in war, by sea or land, until exchanged, &c.

D

Euryalus,

Euryalus, off Cadiz, Oct. 27, 1805.

“ MY LORD MARQUIS,

“ A great number of Spanish subjects having been wounded in the late action, between the British and the combined fleets of Spain and France, on the 21st inst. humanity, and my desire to alleviate the sufferings of these wounded men, dictate to me to offer to your Excellency their enlargement; that they may be taken proper care of in the hospitals on shore: provided your Excellency will send boats to convey them; with a proper officer, to give receipts for the number; and acknowledge them in your Excellency's answer to this letter, to be prisoners of war, to be exchanged before they serve again.

“ I beg to assure your Excellency of my high consideration, and that I am, &c.

(Signed) C. COLLINGWOOD.”

To his Excellency the Marquis de Solana, Captain
General of Andalusia, Governor, &c. Cadiz.

No. 3.

It is the happiness, as well as the duty, of the Christian, to view all things as in the hand of God; and, while he knows that not a hair falls from the head, nor a sparrow to the ground, without his heavenly Father, he cannot but notice, as the interpositions of his providence, those circumstances, however trivial they may appear in themselves, which ultimately lead to great and remarkable deliverances. Such is the series of events which follow; each of which evidently prepared the way, and disposed things for the late unparalleled and decisive naval victory. The detail, as communicated by an intelligent friend, may afford pleasure to the attentive observer of Divine Providence, and excite admiration and gratitude.

In the beginning of the year a great number of ships were ready for sea in Toulon, Cadiz, and Rochefort. Subsequent events seem to prove, that it was intended to make a vigorous attack on our West-Indian possessions, by assembling all these squadrons at a given time in that quarter.

In January of this year, in pursuance of this design, the Rochefort squadron escaped our fleets, and sailed to the West-Indies---arrived---threw the islands into consternation---committed depredations---enquired anxiously after the Toulon and Cadiz squadrons, but, though pursued by Admiral Cochrane, returned safely to France.

Jan. 15th, the Toulon fleet put to sea, Lord Nelson's fleet being absent in the eastern part of the Mediterranean, *but was driven back by a storm.* Its intention was to raise the blockade of Cadiz, to take with it that squadron, and unite with the Rochefort, *already slipped out, but was thus providentially frustrated!!!*

In April, however, but while the Rochefort squadron was either on its return to Europe, or actually arrived in port, the Toulon fleet did effect its escape; and was seen, with astonishment and chagrin, by the garrison of Gibraltar, standing, with colours flying, through the Straights. Sir John Orde, with a few ships, was compelled to raise the blockade of Cadiz---the two squadrons joined---pursued their voyage

age to the West-Indies---arrived there in the middle of May---diffused consternation through the islands---and in England: for their destination was not ascertained for three months after they sailed.

Lord Nelson was far up the Mediterranean, and was a month behind the combined fleet; which, however, he tracked out with a sagacity that excited general admiration---boldly pursued it with only eleven sail of the line, though that fleet entered Martinique, consisting of sixteen, and was joined by two more from Rochefort, making eighteen.

Lord Nelson had so quick a passage, that he arrived in twenty-four days at Barbadoes, only three weeks after the combined squadron. This interval would have been sufficient, indeed, to do prodigious mischief to our possessions, had it been actively employed; but, either through fear of his being close after them, or for some other unknown cause, in which however, *mark the particular providence of God over us*, the combined fleet remained at Martinique *till about the very time of Lord Nelson's arrival.*

Martinique is but about an hundred miles north of Barbadoes; and here we should have thought it a most happy thing had Lord Nelson received just information, and traced the enemy there; *but God determined otherwise, and, while he seemed to thwart our most ardent wishes, was preparing to fulfil them, and even far to surpass them.*

Misinformation at Barbadoes sent Lord Nelson in pursuit of the enemy southward, two days sail, to Trinidad; where, on his arrival, he learnt that they had not appeared. It seems likely that the combined fleet got intelligence of Lord Nelson's being in those seas, and probably of his having sailed southward; for, *during the four days lost in going to and returning from Trinidad*, they slipped out of Martinique, sailed northward, passed by Antigua, which lies several days sail north of Martinique, on the 8th June, and steered direct for Europe: *having effected no injury of any importance to our possessions; and exhibiting to the world the disgraceful sight of a fleet of eighteen sail running away before one of little more than half its number.*

But notice the providence of God, in not permitting Lord Nelson to overtake the enemy! The disproportion between their force was so great, that the victory, if obtained, would most likely have been indecisive; and, however decisive, could not have crippled the enemy in any degree so much as that to which the disappointment then met with actually led.

On the 13th June, Lord Nelson passed Antigua in pursuit of the enemy, who had then the start of him five days. With his usual sagacity he followed them in the very track they had taken across the Atlantic; but, on his arrival off the coast of Spain, he seems to have lost their track, as they sailed north for Ferrol, and he steered eastward for Cadiz. He arrived in Gibraltar bay, July 22d, the very day on which the combined squadron fell in with Sir Robert Calder off Ferrol.

And here notice again the signal interference of Providence. Our Admiralty had taken every precaution to blockade, with as much force as could be collected, those ports into which the enemy, of whose return to Europe they were informed, would be most likely to enter. Sir Robert Calder was blockading the port of Ferrol with ten or eleven ships, and it is said that the present venerable First Lord of the Admiralty directed Admiral Stirling, who was blockading Rochefort with four or five ships, by a letter under his own hand, to join Adm. Calder,

which

which he did only the day before the enemy appeared! whose force was twenty sail of the line, with three ships of fifty guns, while Admirals Calder and Stirling united had but fifteen. An action ensued, in which two of the enemy's ships were taken. For some reasons, at present not fully understood, the engagement was not renewed, as was expected; and the enemy took shelter in Vigo: where, it seems, they got intelligence that Admiral Stirling had returned to the blockade of Rochefort, and that, of course, Sir Robert Calder was too weak to oppose their entrance into Ferrol; which they accordingly accomplished: and Sir Robert Calder fell back on Lord Cornwallis's fleet off Brest. The combined fleet, reinforced by the ships in Ferrol, now amounted to twenty-seven or twenty-eight sail, and left Ferrol about the middle of August. About six days after Sir Robert Calder returned to his station off Ferrol with a reinforcement, having now under him about twenty sail. In the mean time Lord Nelson, having refreshed his fleet at Gibraltar, took his station off Cape St. Vincent, to wait for the enemy, *expecting, as it appears, that he was not yet arrived in the European seas*; but, hearing at length of Adm. Calder's engagement, and having ascertained that the enemy were got into port, he steered for England, where he arrived Aug. 17th, having left most of his fleet with Lord Cornwallis off Brest.

But now mark, that this cleared the way for the combined squadron to get into Cadiz, which it could not have done, had Lord Nelson kept his station, without fighting him. *This seemed adverse, but yet it was a preparatory step to the wonderful victory of Trafalgar! It seemed also adverse, that Admirals Calder and Stirling should separate so soon after the battle, and leave Sir Robert Calder so weak that he could not resist the entrance of the enemy into Ferrol; but this also was a preparatory step in Providence that the Ferrol squadron might be released, and find its ruin at Trafalgar! Let us wonder and adore!!!*

Sir Robert Calder finding the enemy had left Ferrol, pursued him till he discovered that he had taken refuge in Cadiz; in which port he was, at length, blockaded by Admirals Calder and Collingwood, with twenty-six sail.

Here, then, through a train of most remarkable circumstances, were thirty-three sail of the line brought together contrary to our wishes!--in spite of our varied and strenuous endeavours!--having frequently alarmed our apprehensions, and now exciting our fears! But these were all PREPARATORY CIRCUMSTANCES to a Victory, great beyond example, and surpassing all expectation!

No. 4.

Though we deprecate the idea going abroad, at least in the sense in which it has been by many misunderstood, that "*they are suffering in order to divert the storm from us,*" yet surely, independent of this, their distresses must claim our pity, excite our prayers, and demand all the assistance we can render to them, while their calamities still increase the causes of our thankfulness. The following Extracts will engage our sympathy.

Extract

Extract of a Letter from Mr. Jung, Aulic Counsellor, Heidelberg.

October 23, 1805.

"But six weeks ago, the Emperor Napoleon was at Boulogne; and now he is in the heart of Bavaria, at the head of 140, or 150,000 men: and the Austrian army is either killed, taken prisoners, or dispersed. How will this end! The whole of Germany, and the northern nations, are in arms. It is awful indeed! And all the violence of this tremendous storm falls upon our poor native country. Last summer there was such a scarcity in several parts of Saxony, Lusatia, Silesia, Bohemia, Austria, and other neighbouring provinces, that many baked bran for bread, and used grass for vegetables; some people even went to those places, where dead horses were thrown, and fed upon their flesh. Now, in addition to the usual population of the country, there are 150,000 men coming from the west, and more than 100,000 from the east, who must also be fed: and in the northern parts the harvest has again been very scanty. My very heart bleeds at the sight of this universal distress. O! that some relief might be afforded us! And perhaps our hopes of receiving some assistance from England may not be disappointed."

Extract of a Letter from Stuttgart, Oct. 14, 1805.

"What would you feel, could you now see our city! It has quite the appearance of a camp, 20,000 French soldiers having been quartered upon us. We have two officers and twelve privates in our own house, and some of our neighbours had from thirty to forty. Provisions became so scarce, that they were hardly to be procured. There are some districts in the vicinity of Ulm, in which *every thing is entirely consumed*; and we have *an universal famine to fear*. The *vintage of this year has also failed!!*"

Extract of a Letter from Nuremburg, Oct. 19, 1805.

"The Lord our God gives Victory to whom he pleases—therefore let us not murmur, but let us leave our cause to Him.—O! may England in particular do so at the present time. May *all* the people of that country, with mercy so much and so long blessed, open their eyes to see that it is high time to seek THE LORD, and to humble themselves before Him, who *alone can, AND WILL* protect them, if they come but in the right manner to Him."

Extreme distress is experienced at this time in various parts of Germany; of which most authentic accounts have been received from different quarters. Foraging parties of soldiers have traversed the country in various directions, and, at the point of the bayonet, have compelled the farmers to thrash out their grain for the use of the French army;—the season too has been so unfavourable, that the vintage has failed:—Therefore, the poor inhabitants can now, neither get bread for themselves or their children to eat, nor their common beverage, of low wines, to drink. As to animal food, the armies have in many places cleared away most of the cattle. There are numbers of very pious people in the utmost distress, for want of the absolute necessities of life.

Subscriptions are received, for the Relief of these distressed People, at the following Bankers: Messrs. *Down, Thornton*, and Co. Bartholomew-lane; *Hankey* and Co. Fenchurch-street; and *Hoares*, Fleet-street.

No.

No. 5.

An Institution was formed in the year 1780, by a few persons who were led seriously to consider, and deeply to deplore, the lamentable ignorance of the great body of those two classes of men, to whom the country look up as the means of national defence. This consideration determined them to form a Society, for the sole purpose of distributing Bibles among the sailors and soldiers of the British Navy and Army, which has since adopted the name of the **NAVAL and MILITARY BIBLE SOCIETY**.

For several years the Institution was amply supported, by liberal donations, numerous subscriptions, and various collections at different churches and other places of worship; which enabled the Society to distribute Bibles very extensively. Constant applications were received from Naval and Military Officers, expressing their earnest desire to have the Bible put into the hands of their men, and engaging to use their influence to promote the views of the Society therein. By these means about 35,000 Bibles and Testaments have been distributed.

Notwithstanding the encouragement at first experienced, it is greatly to be regretted, that, from the death of many of the most liberal supporters of the Institution, its funds have so far declined, as to be very inadequate to its benevolent purpose.

The recent establishment of another Society, **THE BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY**, upon an extensive scale, has also led some of the friends of this Institution to conceive, that its continuance was less necessary. Their spheres of action are, however, very different: nor is it the design of that respectable Society to accomplish the objects of this. Every lover of true religion, the best interest of his country, or the spiritual welfare of those whose valour under God has been the means of its preservation, will regret to hear, that, even during the present unexampled warfare, the Committee have been obliged, with painful reluctance, considerably to reduce the number of Bibles allotted to ships and regiments.

It is with pleasure the Author observes that some of the most respectable and noble characters in the nation have lately engaged to direct and promote its designs. It is therefore hoped that the liberality of the public will prevent the recurrence of a circumstance so much to be lamented, and which, it is apprehended, has been caused only by ignorance of the society itself, and its designs.

Subscriptions will be received by *the Author*, or by *Mr. Stephenson*, Treasurer, William-street, Bridge-street, Blackfriars.

No. 6.

According to the last signal of the ever to be lamented Admiral—
“ England expects every man to do his duty.”

F I N I S.

THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE SOUL :

A

S E R M O N,

PREACHED AT

THE PARISH CHURCH OF

ST. ANDREW WARDROBE, AND ST. ANN, BLACKFRIARS,

ON

The First of May, 1808.

FOR THE BENEFIT OF

THE SOCIETY IN SCOTLAND,

FOR

PROPAGATING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE

IN THE

HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS.

BY THE REV. WILLIAM GOODE, A. M.

RECTOR OF THE SAID CHURCH.

LONDON:

PRINTED BY T. GILLET, CROWN-COURT, FLEET-STREET.

1809.

At the Annual General Meeting of the Correspondent Board, in London, of the Society in Scotland, for propagating Christian Knowledge in the Highlands and Islands, May 18, 1808,

JOHN-WILLIAM ADAM, Esq. *in the Chair.*

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY,

That the thanks of this Board be given to the Rev. WILLIAM GOODE, A. M. for his excellent Sermon, preached before them on the 1st instant, at his Church, St. Ann's, Blackfriars; and that he be requested to permit the same to be printed for the use of the Society.

THOMAS RUTLEDGE, D. D. }
ROBERT YOUNG, D. D. } *Secretaries.*

THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE SOUL :

A

S E R M O N.

PROVERBS xix. 2.

*Also that the Soul be without knowledge, it is
not good.*

IF ignorance be the mother of devotion, how are we to understand the declaration of our text? If wisdom and understanding are not to be esteemed the most valuable of all acquisitions, the word of inspiration is calculated to promote the error. From the lips of the wisest of men, the Spirit of the Lord has given us this instruction, “Wisdom is the principal thing, therefore get wisdom, and with all thy getting get understanding.”—“Wisdom is better than gold.”—“Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and
B “ the

“the man that getteth understanding.” It is the *chief concern*, the *true riches*, the *supreme felicity* of man.

We cannot be at a loss to perceive the species of wisdom to which the allusion is here made. It is doubtless that, which our office leads us peculiarly to recommend, and, for the diffusion of which, the exertions of the Society, for which I have now the honour to plead, are chiefly directed; that wisdom which is *spiritual, practical*, and *saving*, “the wisdom which cometh from “above.”

In many other respects, it must be acknowledged, that “in much wisdom there is much “grief,” and “he that increaseth knowledge “increaseth sorrow:” that stores of learned treasures are neither profitable to their possessors, nor to those around them; neither tend to improve the mind, sanctify the heart, nor rectify the conduct. Every species of knowledge must indeed have its suitable place, in which it possesses a degree of weight and importance, and might often be employed to much better purposes than it is. But, however valuable the acquisition may be in the class to which it belongs, in a moral and spiritual point of view such knowledge

ledge

ledge might often be dispensed with, without any material detriment to the real interest of man: but that the soul be without knowledge can in no sense be good, neither in itself considered,—nor for the benefit of the individual,—nor for society around.

So important is the truth of our text, as it stands in our present translation; but a slight alteration in the reading, which more exactly exhibits the sense of the original, will also render it more suitable to our present design.

I am well aware that, in a popular assembly, such intimations are better avoided, lest they should tend through misapprehension to weaken the confidence of the unlearned, in the veracity of that translation which they are compelled to use. It may however be sufficient to prevent such an effect, if at the same time it be remarked that, amidst the various readings which the blunders, neglect, or ignorance of transcribers unwarily introduced, while the sacred oracles were yet in manuscript—or amidst the few inaccuracies of the common translation, there is no one in either which can justly affect any one point of Christian doctrine. We are still presented with the same view of the *state of Man*; the *person, work, and blessings of the*
SAVIOUR;

SAVIOUR ; the *person*, *offices*, and *influences* of GOD THE HOLY GHOST ; and the *distinguishing principles* of the Gospel. Such corrections may sometimes confirm, illustrate, and increase the beauty or the energy of scriptural views, but can never be honestly employed to weaken or subvert one generally acknowledged doctrine of the Christian church. The confidence of this fact may arm the uninstructed mind against those perplexing apprehensions, which sometimes arise from the temptations of the enemy, or the artifice of deceivers, when studying that *Word of truth*, on which their salvation depends.

Thus guarded, I venture to observe, that the soul, in the original of our text, does not appear to be the *subject* in which this knowledge rests, but the *object* which it has in view. Some therefore have rendered the passage, “ *To be without the knowledge of the soul is not good.*” This, no doubt, more fully marks out the design of the original, yet perhaps does not completely express its meaning. The words may, we apprehend, be rendered, “ *verily without soul-knowledge there is no good.*” They then teach us this

נֶם בְּלֹא דַעַת נַפְשׁ לֹא טוֹב. Etiam absque scientia Anima, non bonum. MONTANUS.

important

important lesson, so apposite to our present design, that “ without soul-knowledge, that knowledge which pertains to the soul, nothing can be really good or excellent to man ; that every thing beside leaves the sinner in a state of deplorable darkness, in the most important of all concerns, and destitute of that, which alone can secure his present and eternal felicity. A truth this which cannot be too deeply imprest upon our minds, or too forcibly inculcated upon all around us, when it is so evident that, amidst the different kinds of knowledge after which man is pursuing, this knowledge is considered as of the least moment ; that men are so indisposed towards the necessary means of attaining it ; that the Bible, God’s only instrument of conveying it, is of all things the most disregarded ; and that every pursuit of literature, and even of folly, is accounted more honourable amongst mankind, than that which will lead them to the knowledge of God, of *themselves*, of a SAVIOUR, and of *immortality*.

It was, no doubt, a conviction of the importance of *this* knowledge, that led to the original formation, and the liberal and extensive plans of this Society, and which has been the cause of its so ample support. Long may it exist, with an increasing

increasing influence, to promote Christian knowledge among the most northern, and least favoured, inhabitants of this highly favoured Isle; who had long been excluded from a community in its blessings either of civilization or religious privileges, and might still have remained either in uncultivated ignorance, or the slaves of popish superstition, had it not been for the exertions of this institution. God forbid that any illiberal prejudices of bigotry should check our benevolent assistance to a sister church, which, though differing from us in point of discipline, still "*holds the Head,*" is engaged in promoting the knowledge of the same fundamental truths of revelation; and which God has endowed with peculiar wisdom in conducting this design, and honoured with most abundant blessing on their labours.

I shall feel myself happy, if my feeble efforts should, in any degree, contribute to forward its noble objects; the importance of which cannot be more strongly enforced than by the views of our text: since, *without that knowledge of the soul, which it is its design to diffuse abroad, there can be no good.*

Under this impression let us apply ourselves
to

to the subject, which appears to involve in itself the following considerations :

The value of the soul :

The means of attaining the knowledge of its state, and its true interests :

The knowledge which is thereby communicated to us concerning it : and

The absolute importance of its attainment.

Oh ! *Holy Ghost*, the divine teacher of thy church, sensible that without thee we can do nothing, we intreat thy presence and thy power, then shall the feeblest instrument and the weakest efforts produce the most desirable effects, and “ the excellency of the power shall be of thee “ and not of us.”

Our *first* consideration is the value of the soul.

But what is the soul ? This we shall never understand till we come into that world where disembodied souls exist. Men define and explain, and then think they understand ; but here
the

the bounds of human knowledge are very confined. We know the soul though so intimate an inmate only by its qualities, and this will be sufficient for our present purpose, and for any purpose of practical improvement.

We generally consider the soul as that *something* within us whereby we think and judge, reason and determine. Immaterial and spiritual, it is conscious of faculties which extend beyond the limits of earth and sensible objects, and is capable of contemplating not only the worlds unseen, not only the works and ways of God, but the infinite perfections of the divine nature. Its powers are formed for the service of God, in a much more exalted state of existence than that in which they are now exercised. And sometimes, when renewed by his grace, it feels an inward evidence of that which constitutes its true dignity, a capacity for the enjoyment of God, in the closest union, and in the communion of his blessedness.

But what stamps upon the soul its greatest value is its *immortality*. It is “the *breath of* “*lives*” from the great Creator, and formed to exist throughout eternity.

ETERNITY must give a value and importance to any thing. Every thing connected with eternity must claim our serious attention : how much more then that *immortal soul*, which must exist in the use and exercise of all its faculties, perhaps eternally increasing in their extent and vigour, and forming a capacity for the most intense happiness, or unspeakable misery, throughout *eternity* ! Our views are lost in the contemplation. The powers of numbers fail to calculate. And, when the human imagination hath exhausted its conceptions, and wandered through millions of millions of ages, we yet stand but upon the threshold of *eternity* ! How solemn the consideration. It has been well observed that the temporal salvation of kingdoms, or of universal nature, can bear no proportion to the salvation of one soul, which, in the progress of eternity (if I may so speak) must exceed the aggregate duration of them all. And do I possess such an inmate ? Is every one around me endowed with such an immortal spirit ? How infinitely important that we should acquire the knowledge—how infinitely important to communicate the knowledge,—of its present state, its hopes, its fears, its expectations ! “ To be without the “ knowledge of the soul it is not good.” Nothing can supply the deficiency. For, “ what will it

profit a man if he gain the whole world, and “lose his own soul?” Without the knowledge of the soul, what are we the better for its existence? The possession of an immortal soul, though an invaluable benefit, may thus become ultimately the means of greater misery. While it affords to man the opportunity of manifesting still greater ingratitude and wickedness, it may sink him at present beneath the brute creation in debasement, and fit him only for still greater displays of the righteous judgment of God. The *real dignity of human nature* may thus form the basis of its more extensive depravity, its accumulated guilt, and deeper degradation. Let us then consider,

Secondly, The means of knowledge, in those things which relate to the state and welfare of the soul.

Here I apprehend no danger of confutation in asserting, that *the knowledge of divine things can come alone from God*: that the knowledge of a spiritual world, and the things connected with it, must be alone derived from him. Hence arises the absolute necessity of revelation; without which man had remained as ignorant that he had a soul, as of its properties, state, and expectations.

pectations. There is at least nothing in the actual state of man which can disprove this. He never did exist without a revelation. And it is impossible to say, how far the primary discoveries of God to the two common sources of mankind, Adam and Noah, may have extended themselves, or what influence they may still diffuse, through corrupted tradition, among the most unenlightened of their descendants. The vestiges of those institutions, which the human mind could never have devised, and which bear the evident marks of divine original, such as *sacrifices for sin*, &c. are certainly found amongst them; and to the present day constitute a chief part of their religious worship, in appeasing their angry deities. Nor can it ever be shewn, by what series of argument, or chain of induction, either nature or reason could lead man on from the knowledge of earthly to the apprehension of spiritual things; from the knowledge of material substances, (the only objects with which he is surrounded,) to the apprehension of immaterial things, of which he could have no notices in the things he saw, and which in the clearest light of revelation man is so apt to misunderstand. The powers of his soul, without the discoveries, by revelation, of those objects to which they are suited, might have remained as *latent capacities*,

as perhaps many other powers which he possesses do, and will do, till they expand in the world of spirits. The wisest heathen had (it appears) so far lost the views of *original* revelation, as to be entirely unacquainted with the idea of what is properly termed *creation*; and which is the very first truth of the sacred Scriptures. What, indeed, has their boasted philosophy discovered either in truth or morals? In the first they appear enveloped in “darkness which may be felt;” while their boasted systems of morality allowed the indulgence of the grossest vices of the human heart.—The higher and nobler principles of their systems are either the relicts of revelation, or derived from its diverging rays, and may generally be traced up to the connection of their philosophers with the sources of *divine light*.

And wherein have the still more enlightened philosophers (as they style themselves) of the present day exceeded in abilities, or in fortunate discovery, their heathen predecessors? Have they really added any one idea to their moral system? the source is evident. Their wisest dogmas, their best ornaments, have been, in some way or other, direct or indirect, derived from those Scriptures which they affect to despise. And it is certain that what appears common to them
both

both is not borrowed by the *Christian revelation* from *them*, but by *them* from *it*.

Let not these observations be deemed useless speculations. In such times as these it is of the utmost importance that they should be urged upon the minds of Christians in general, to counteract the absurd boasts of infidelity. They are calculated, moreover, to impress the mind of the believer, with the highest admiration of the divine wisdom and beneficence, and to lead all of us most highly to value the Bible, that *Book of God*, that discovery of His will, that revelation of all which is necessary for us to know as to our souls, and “without the knowledge of which “there is no good.” They are not indeed direct proofs of the authenticity or inspiration of the sacred volume, nor are they offered as such; but, as demonstrations of its excellence, they ought to dispose our minds to attend candidly to such proofs, since if we have not in this book the declaration of the divine will we are entirely destitute of it, and the dilemma in which man is placed must be awfully alarming. Blessed be God that those proofs, external and internal, are both numerous and irrefragable. It is impossible for us to enter into them at present, but we would venture to rest the whole argument upon the solution

lution of one question, which infidelity can never answer, *If the Scriptures are not from God, from whence are they?*

If then they afford us the only directory in those things which concern the knowledge of the soul; if their divine authority be fully attested, it is to them *alone* we must apply for information on these most interesting subjects. Their plain dictates require our implicit assent; their doctrines claim our unequivocal credit; their directions demand our submissive obedience.—Little will it avail us, to have the means of information in our hands, or to communicate them to others, unless thereby we are effectually taught ourselves: unless we learn from the book of God that wisdom whereby we may become “wise unto salvation:” unless our minds are enlightened by its truth, and our hearts sanctified by the influence of that truth: unless it be cordially believed by us, and “work effectually by believing.” But, in order to this, we must be acquainted with the subjects which will arise under our next consideration.

Thirdly, The information which the Scriptures afford, or the leading truths to which they require our assent.

These,

These, indeed, are subjects of common consideration amongst us ; and blessed be the abundant mercy of our God that they are so ; for, like the light of the sun, or like the bread we eat, their constant recurrence renders them still more precious, as they are the means of light, life, and salvation. Suffer us then to run over the most distinguishing points, not by way of argument, to convince your understanding (which I trust will be needless), but by way of remembrance, to revive the sense of their importance and excellence upon the heart.

What views here open upon the mind—humiliating but encouraging : discovering the true dignity, but the miserable depravity of man ; leading up to the source of sovereign grace as the origin of redemption ; directing to the divinely instituted remedy ; manifesting the treasures of spiritual blessings in a Redeemer suited to our state and nature ; and pointing the believing mind, through a series of declarations, facts, and promises, to the most perfect felicity, in the full perfection of all the powers of the soul, in the presence and enjoyment of God throughout eternity ! Here we have the fulness of knowledge, in all things which relate to the immortal soul,
and

and “ *without the knowledge of which there is no good.*”

We cannot be surprised to find that, in the revelation of invisible and spiritual realities, many things should be found above the comprehension of our powers, in the present state of existence. Nor need we be surprised that the pride of wisdom should reject those truths which elude its research ; or the pride of moral virtue despise its humbling declarations ; any more than that the corruption of an earthly mind should reject its pure and sanctifying precepts. Whatever difficulties may attend the subject, it is certain that the very foundation of the system of revealed truth is laid in the *fall*, the consequent depravity, the guilt, and the helplessness of man. Its whole structure of facts, doctrines, and precepts is raised upon this basis. Without the conviction of this we can never understand its nature or design ; and, without the deepest impression of the truth of this upon our hearts, we shall never discern nor welcome the wonders of its grace. This however is the grand truth, which man is disposed to deny ; though by denying he still more confirms its reality. Unwilling to humble himself before that God, from
whose

whose allegiance he hath broken, whose authority he hath insulted, and whose law he hath violated, and against which his heart rises in enmity and aversion, he tries by every evasion to deceive himself as to his true state and character. He compares himself with himself; he compares himself with others; he forms for his conduct a law of sincerity, of which the Scriptures are totally ignorant; or, as the chief effort in delusion, he brings down the holy spiritual law of God to the standard of his own ability and imperfection, and then easily fancies that he attains to the standard of the law. Thus armed, he ventures to reject the evidence of his senses as to all things around him, in the actual display of human corruption, and to deny or debase the humbling principles of Christianity; the peculiar doctrines of the grace of God; the richest display of divine wisdom and compassion. He reduces that glorious system of redemption into which "angels desire to look," and do look with admiration, which is "an height, a depth, a length, a breadth of divine love, which passeth all understanding, to a mere system of ethical precepts.

We deny not the *dignity of human nature*—as it came forth from the hand of its creator, its

dignity was great ; consisting in the vast powers and faculties of an immortal spirit, and its capacities of contemplating, serving, and enjoying God. But higher were those angels of his presence, “ who are now reserved in chains of darkness “ against the judgment of the great day.” The higher the dignity the deeper the fall of a rebellious creature. It is the act alone of sovereign mercy that fallen man is not involved in the same irretrievable misery. To be without the knowledge of this, the true state of our soul, is not good. This alone will account for those circumstances in which we are cast, in a miserable and dying world. To this the Scripture traces up all the miseries of life. “ Sin entered into the “ world, and death by sin, and so death passeth “ upon all men, because all have sinned.” It confirms its account of our original corruption and guilt, by referring us to that greatest mystery in divine providence, the sufferings of our infant race, who, though “ they have not sinned after “ the similitude of Adam’s transgression,” feel the effect of it in death. For “ death reigned “ from Adam to Moses even over those who had “ not thus sinned.” Here it calls us to adore the sovereignty and justice of God : and let my soul exclaim, “ shall not the judge of all the earth do “ right.”

When

When once confirmed in the belief of that scriptural position, that the cause of all misery is sin, we shall not wonder at all the miseries which surround us, since we are told, by the same authority, that “ all have sinned and come short of “ the glory of God ;” and feel within ourselves, and discern in every thing around us, the truth of the assertion.

But the consequences of transgression and guilt do not terminate in this life. “ The soul that “ sinneth it shall die.” They await their final sentence in the world to come, in that death which is suited to the whole nature of sinful man, and which is therefore called, by a solecism in language, but by a solemnity of expression, which will be found capable of truth and reality, from the nature of the immortal soul, *Eternal Death ! !*

In this state man is as helpless as he is guilty. While “ by the law every mouth is stopped “ and all the world stand guilty before God.” “ The redemption of the soul is precious, and it “ ceaseth for ever” from man. “ The Scripture” (it is declared) “ hath *concluded all* under sin,” to make way for the riches of divine grace in his salvation. Not that the Scripture itself has had
any

any influence in altering the real state of man ; but this is the testimony which it bears concerning him. And this it does, when, describing the state of man, it solemnly proclaims, that “ there “ is none righteous, no not one ;” they are all gone out of the way ; they are altogether become unprofitable ; there is none that doeth good, no not one. Rom. iii. 10, 12. And again, “ as many as are of the works of the law are under “ the curse.” So that “ by the deeds of the law “ shall no flesh living be justified.” Gal. iii. 10, and Gal. iii. 22. The design of this is declared to be, “ that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ “ might be *given* to them that believe.” Rom. iii. 20. When the sinner is abased grace shall triumph. When man is humbled God shall be exalted. This has been the plan of all God’s dispensations ever since man became a transgressor ; as most suited to his state and his own perfections. Determined “ to destroy the wisdom of the wise, “ and to bring to nought the understanding of “ the prudent, he hath chosen the foolish things “ of the world to confound the wise, and weak “ things of the world to confound the mighty ; “ the base things of the world, and the things “ which are not hath God chosen, to bring to “ nought things which are ; that no flesh should “ glory in his presence.” I Cor. i. 26 to 29.

Upon

Upon the foundation of the guilt, depravity, and ruin of his creature, He, whose prerogative it is to bring good out of evil, hath taken an opportunity to erect a temple to his glory; to devise, and to execute a plan, in which is displayed “to powers and principalities in heavenly places, “by the church, the manifold wisdom of God:” in which his justice stands displayed in all its terrors; his grace in all its sweetness; his power in all its grandeur; and his mercy in all its boundless extent. We see it originating in the eternal counsels; in which (if we follow the scripture guidance) we plainly discover *three Persons* entering into covenant, or compact, for the salvation of lost souls. We find names attributed to each, according to the engagements into which they respectively entered, and the offices which they are represented as sustaining, in the great purpose of redeeming love. Names which are continually recurring throughout the whole of the divine testimony, and each of which is uniformly applied, without confusion or deviation, (except that the term Father is frequently applied to the divine nature in general), to the same person in the divine essence, bearing the same office, and to no other. These are *three*, and *no more than three*: FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST.

The

The mode of their existence in the one undivided essence of JEHOVAH, as it is not the subject of revelation, is not amongst the objects of our belief. But the *fact* is as much an article of revelation as any of the plainest declarations of duty exprest therein, and therefore as much requires the submission of our understanding to the wisdom of the great Revealer, as any precept of the Gospel requires the obedience of our heart to his authority.

We are therefore perfectly conformable to Scripture, when we declare that “the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God, and yet they are not three Gods but one God.” For the creed of the Old Testament church is also the creed of the New: “Hear O Israel, JEHOVAH thy ALEIM (thy three covenanters, or three in covenant) is one JEHOVAH.” Deut. vi. 4.

Let not this be considered as a mere speculative doctrine, when it lies at the very foundation of the covenant of Redemption;—when it enters into every part of the system;—when every step in its fulfilment has reference to the three divine persons, and exhibits them as engaged distinctly in its performance;—when our very initiation
into

into the Christian church is fixt, by divine authority, upon a profession of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost ;—when there can be no Christian experience but as “ we draw near to the Father, through the Son, by the Holy Ghost ; ”—and when we can never appear before God in eternity, but as presented to the Father, by the Son, as sanctified by his Holy Spirit. How then can we understand a system, of which these views are thus the very basis and substance, and in which they are continually recurring, if we refuse to admit them as truths. The plainest doctrines of christianity must appear inexplicable unconnected with these views, and it is no wonder if the whole be soon abandoned and denied. To understand, or to explain the *fact* itself is not our province, but to believe. Nor will it be at all surprising to us if, throughout eternity, a finite being, in its highest perfection, should be unable to understand the nature, mode of existence, persons, or perfections of the infinite **JEHOVAH** ; much less will such a want of clear comprehension justify us in refusing our assent to the plain dictates of revealed truth, in a state of existence so limited as the present.

Connected with this grand display of the divine persons and perfections, the glories of redemption

demption present themselves to our view in the oracles of truth.

We are led up to its source, in the sovereign purpose and unmerited love of the Father, when it is declared that "God so loved the world, that "he gave his only begotten Son," &c.; and again, "not that we loved God, but that God "loved us, and sent his son to be the propitiation for our sins."

This wonderful mystery still more unfolds itself, when he who was "the word, who was "with God, and who was God," became flesh and tabernacled amongst us. JOHN i. 1, 14. When in the person of Jesus we behold "IMMANUEL "God with us;" "the great mystery of godliness God manifested in the flesh." How wonderful the declaration of the Apostle, "He who "was in the form of God, and thought it not "robbery to be equal with God, made *himself* of "no reputation," &c. It is here worthy of remark that his condescension, in every step, is represented as his own voluntary act; He *took upon himself* the form of a servant, he *emptied himself*, he *humbled himself*, he *gave himself* to the cross. If he appeared as the man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief, it was because he had voluntarily

voluntarily undertaken to be the surety of his people; that verily he might “bear their sins” and carry their sorrows, might be wounded for “their transgression, and bruised for their iniquity, &c.” Hence he is represented as “made of God the propitiation through faith in his blood,” &c. And in his humiliation he himself informs us of its design; “he came not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give his life a *ransom* for many.” This is that love which his church so admires in him, “who loved it and *gave himself* for it, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour.”

But when “declared to be the *SON of GOD*, “with power, according to the *SPIRIT of holiness*, “by the resurrection from the dead,” we see the divine testimony to his person and doctrine, and the divine acceptance of his work. And, while he thus affords to us the indisputable proof of the resurrection of the body, and of the invisible and spiritual world, he himself opens our way to it, becomes the earnest and the pledge of our entrance to it, and secures its ultimate and eternal enjoyment to all his people by his own possession.

Seated upon his mediatorial throne in our na-

ture, as “ the head of his people,” and “ the head *over all things* to them,” he possesses “ all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge,” “ all the “ fulness of the godhead bodily.” Yea, “ it was well pleasing,” in the economy of salvation, “ that in him should all fulness dwell ; that out “ of his fulness we might receive and grace for “ grace.” Hence, as it is the covenant office of the HOLY GHOST to enlighten, sanctify, and preserve the souls of his people, to testify of Jesus, and reveal him to the heart, this Spirit is in his hands to give, according to the revealed order of the covenant. As the promised Spirit he therefore does and will pour him out in his influences upon the church to the end of time, to glorify his own person, his office, character, and the fulness of his redemption ; to collect a people for himself, and preserve them to his kingdom and glory.

Thus the covenant offices of the three persons in JEHOVAH, arise from the state of man ; their work and blessings are suited to the condition of man, and are thus secured for the enjoyment of all his people. What those blessings are, the word of truth informs us. They are what we might expect them to be, from the wisdom, dignity, and grace of him who obtained and bestows them ;

them; they are all that we can want for the salvation of a lost soul, from the pardon of sin, to the meetness for the possession of eternal glory.

In the divine dignity of the Saviour's person, I behold an infinite merit communicated to his human obedience and sufferings, which, when considered as the appointment of God, and accepted of God for the salvation of sinners, lays such a foundation for my hope before God, my confidence of pardon and salvation in him, as could arise from nothing beside.—Whatever may have been my sin or guilt, I can believe the testimony, that “the blood of Jesus Christ, his son, cleanses from *all* sin.”—Whatever is my state of condemnation as a transgressor of the law, I am assured, and upon such ground it deserves my firmest confidence, that “Jesus Christ is the end of the law *for righteousness*, to *every one* that believeth;” and that “by him all who believe are justified from *all* things;”—Whatever is my helplessness and weakness, what cause can I have of fear, when the LORD JEHOVAH who is my *righteousness*, is also “my *strength*!”—Whatever are my enemies or dangers, if he become “the captain of my salvation,” of whom shall I be afraid? If he be “made of God unto me wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and
“redemption,

“ redemption, then, having nothing else to glory
 “ in, I may glory in the Lord ;”—and well may
 I argue with the apostle, “ He that spared not
 “ his own son, but hath given him up for us all,
 “ how shall he not with him also freely give us
 “ all things !” Rom. viii. 32.

These are blessings arising from the Redeemer's
 dying love, and presented to the view of faith, in
 the word of truth, not only as facts, but in con-
 nection with the most gracious invitations to all
 who feel their need ; and with the most exceed-
 ing great and precious promises to all who seek
 them. These are views which, in connection
 with a serious conviction of our lost estate as sin-
 ners, are of the highest moment. How precious
 that word of grace that discovers them ! Well
 may it be called “ the glorious Gospel of the
 “ blessed God !” Here we discover the door of
 hope opening ; the rays of glory beaming upon
 our souls. When sensible of sin and guilt, the
 promises of the Gospel lay the foundation of
 faith, and introduce into the soul the hope of
 eternal life, “ which God who cannot lie, pro-
 “ mised before the world began,” in Christ Jesus.

The regeneration indeed of the heart,—the dis-
 position of humble penitence, whereby the sinner
 is

is inclined to accept these blessings, as the gifts of grace, and the faith whereby they are received, must indeed be derived from an higher source than corrupted nature, and for this the covenant of grace hath provided. "Jesus is exalted to give repentance and remission of sins," and is the "author and finisher of faith," according to that promise of the new covenant, "I will put my laws into their minds, and in their hearts will I write them," and "I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: for I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities I will remember no more." This is the security of his church; while to the humble inquirer it is sufficient to know that, "he giveth his HOLY SPIRIT to them who ask it," and "whosoever cometh unto him he will in no wise cast out."

Under all the miseries of life, and the fears of death, these views are sufficient to solace and support the mind. But the divine word, received in faith, assures the believer still further, that all his concerns are in the hands of his exalted head. At peace with God in Jesus Christ, all things are at peace with him. Nature and Providence are but the directions of his Lord. And beyond, "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered
" into

“ into the heart of man, what God hath prepared
 “ for them that love him.” “ Life and immor-
 “ tality are brought to light by the Gospel.” By
 faith in Jesus the believer rises from the ruins
 of the fall; he waits amidst all the trials of life
 for his grace, and guidance; and looks for “ the
 “ exceeding great and eternal weight of glory,”
 beyond, “ reserved in heaven for those who are
 “ kept by his almighty power, through faith, unto
 “ salvation.” In the confidence of faith he tri-
 umphs, “ who shall lay any thing to the charge
 “ of God’s elect; it is God that justifieth;....
 “ who shall separate us from the love of Christ?”
 “ All things are ours since we are Christ’s, and
 “ Christ is God’s.”—Compare Rom. viii. 33 to
 39, and I Cor. iii. 21 to 23.

These, I apprehend, are the great and leading
 truths, which the Gospel of Christ reveals, as
 connected with the soul of man. Though the
 sketch is extremely imperfect, yet, by the divine
 blessing, it may be the means of refreshing our
 minds, of strengthening our attachment to them,
 and of exciting our gratitude for such exalted
 mercies.

These great truths,—the divine glory, person,
 and work of the LORD JESUS CHRIST; his com-
 plete

plete satisfaction and atonement for sin ; the personality, office, and influences of his HOLY SPIRIT, bringing the soul into the exercise of that faith, whereby alone they are received and enjoyed ; constitute the main pillars of Christianity. These were the instruments which the Spirit of God employed to pull down the bulwarks of papal superstition, and to effect the reformation of the church ; and these are the means which he still employs, for the calling and preserving a people for himself, out of an ungodly world. And it needs only to observe the history of the church from the beginning, to be convinced, that, when these truths have been omitted, or but slightly treated of, in its ministrations, there the Spirit's influence has been withdrawn ; a dearth of religious affections, and a failure in Christian practice, have soon followed ; the church hath been again confounded with the world, and its interests have rapidly decayed. By this then let us learn their value. Let the ministers of Christ, holding them dearer than life, boldly defend them ; since it is evident that the Spirit of God will acknowledge nothing, however gratifying to human wisdom, with *his own power*, but *his own truth*, and the simple declaration of that truth. You, my fellow Christians, steadfastly adhere to these views ; and let our united efforts be exerted to diffuse them
around.

around, and commend them by their influence upon our conduct. For, without the knowledge of these things, which relate to the soul there is no good.

Fourthly. Though the *importance* of this knowledge, according to our plan, must form the closing subject of our consideration, after what has been said, a very few observations may suffice.

The great, the eternal blessings connected with this knowledge, together with the distressing situation, and extreme danger, of those who are destitute of it, must plainly discover its importance, and its excellency.

We need not here advert to the situation of the Heathen world to prove this assertion: their darkness and depravity—their vain superstitions—their idolatrous rites—their human sacrifices—their cruel devotions—their abominable practices, even under the garb of religion—their justified debaucheries and immoralities—would indeed afford a striking demonstration of its truth. But, in our own Christian land, we have too many similar proofs arising from a want of the power and vital principle of Christianity, and an ignorance of its nature and design.

The

The world at large is indebted to the diffusion of Christianity, for the amelioration of its state. Wherever its truths have been admitted, there its influence has been felt. It sometimes civilizes where it scarcely moralizes, and it moralizes (if I may so speak) where it does not spiritualize the heart. This may be observed even in our own land, where the word of God, though in our hands, often lies neglected and unknown, till a powerful and enlightened ministry excites the attention to it. Then an effect has been produced which nothing else could have wrought. The moral appearance of a place has been materially changed, though but a few may have evidently “received the truth in the love of it.”

But to come more immediately to the point. If the true happiness of man consist in the perfection of his whole nature, (as it certainly must) of what use is all that knowledge, which is unconnected with the interest of the superior part of his nature,—his immortal soul? What is the real value of those attainments which leave that immortal soul in a state of depravity, guilt, and ruin? A moment’s reflection will discover their vanity! But, if the acquisition of that knowledge, or those attainments and possessions, have been the means of leading us to neglect the interests of

the soul ; a moment's reflection will discover the folly and the guilt ! To a soul under the guilt of sin, nothing can be good. Wisdom and knowledge are but splendid ignorance, riches are but vanity, honors but an empty sound. The great, the important point neglected, the *one thing needful*, of what value will all besides be esteemed “ when God taketh away the soul ? ” In the day, when God shall declare “ thy soul is required of thee ; then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided ? ”—Not thine.—Thy body can no longer enjoy them, they are not suited to the state into which the immortal soul is about to pass, and the great labour of their attainment will then appear to thee, as it does now to the eye of God, but a proof of egregious folly ; in which the interest of an immortal spirit has been sacrificed to vanity and lies.

Suffer me then, my fellow-sinner, to recommend to your attention the word of truth, which is able to save thy soul, to “ make thee wise unto “salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus.” Let me press it upon you, seriously to consider the dispensation of mercy which you enjoy, under the clearest light of the Gospel. If these privileges would be valuable to others, to whom you wish to send them, are they not equally so to us,
 who

who actually enjoy them? If, imprest with their excellency, we use our efforts to diffuse them abroad, shall we be indifferent to their blessings, or neglect to secure them ourselves? This would be the excess of folly! Search then the Scriptures; study their contents; meditate upon their truths; rejoice in their blessings. But always remember that grand truth which is most prominent upon their surface, that, without divine teaching, you can have no spiritual understanding of them. “For the natural man knoweth not the things of the Spirit of God, they are foolishness to him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” Attend therefore your reading the Scriptures, attend your observance of every ordinance of the Christian church, with dependance upon the teaching of God the Holy Ghost, and prayer for his effectual influence.

But let it be especially recollected that, if to be without the revelation of God to man, and the light of the Christian dispensation is most seriously to be lamented, if men may “perish for *lack* of knowledge,” how much more awful it must be, to slight the means of information when in our hands, to neglect the sacred dictates when revealed and proclaimed, and to perish for
the

the *abuse* of knowledge. Let us especially beware how, with the clearest dispensation of divine light shining upon our minds, we deny the plain truths of revelation, because they are not congenial to our corrupted dispositions ; how we despise its humbling but saving doctrines, because they are beyond our investigation, or full comprehension ; or how, with a profession of its system, we remain uninfluenced by its power. It is the design of the Gospel to renew the soul in the image of God, and without this effect it has never answered its purpose upon us. For, “ except a man be born again he cannot see the “ kingdom of God.” Its truths will work effectually when believed ; and, when bringing salvation to the heart, will “ teach us to deny un- “ godliness and worldly lusts, and to live right- “ eously, soberly, and godly, in the present “ world.” Here “ he that getteth wisdom loveth “ his own soul,” and “ he that keepeth it shall “ find good.” But, oh ! may our God forbid it, that the awful denunciation of the prophet should ever rest upon us, pronounced on the voluntary ignorance of his ancient nation, “ My “ people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.” “ Because thou hast rejected knowledge, I also “ will reject thee.” Hos. iv. 6. “ It is a people of “ no understanding, therefore, he that made them “ will

“ will not have mercy on them, and he that
 “ formed them will shew them no favour.”
 Is. xxvii. 11.

Now then, I apprehend, we need only to review the subjects which have passed before us, to engage your attention to the noble objects of this benevolent institution.

Only let it be granted that man has an immortal soul, and, without the knowledge of its state, its interests, and its concerns, there can be no real good. But, if that soul be fallen from its original state of purity and felicity, exposed to misery and death, the subject becomes infinitely more important. By the concurring testimony, however, of Scripture, of fact, and the experience of all ages of mankind, this is the case. In the word of God alone the remedy is discovered. There we behold a God of *Glory* but of *Grace*; of *Holiness* but of *Mercy* ! The plan of redeeming love is laid in the eternal councils, and becomes the work of the three in JEHOVAH. There “ on *Jesus the mighty one*, our help was laid.”

We see the plan gradually developing itself, in its different parts, and proceeding forward in its fulfilment in all the dispensations of God to
 man :

man : till at last, in the person of IMMANUEL, the WORD made *flesh*, we see that infinite atonement rendered, which forms a full, perfect, and proper satisfaction for sin ; that righteousness wrought out which honors the demands of the law ; that redemption completed by which “ God “ is just when he justifies ” the believing sinner. Here we are invited to fly, for pardon and salvation, with a promise of acceptance, with a promise of every blessing the penitent sinner can need, or the humble believer can enjoy through time and through eternity. The *ground*, the *object*, the *immutable security* of the believer’s hope is pointed out ; and, in the hand of the SPIRIT, this *word of truth* becomes “ the power “ of God unto salvation.”

You who have experienced its grace will admire its glories. It constitutes the only basis of your hope ; it affords you support and consolation under all the trials of life ; it dissipates the fear of death ; and then directs your views beyond, to “ the grace that is to be brought unto “ you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. Blessed “ be the Lord God of Israel, who hath thus vi- “ sited and redeemed his people ; who hath given “ to us the knowledge of salvation, by the remis- “ sion of sins ; through the tender mercy of our “ God,

“ God, whereby the day spring from on high
 “ hath *visited us*, to give light to them that sit in
 “ darkness and the shadow of death, to guide our
 “ feet into the way of peace.” Blessed be God,
 this light hath shone upon us, let it be our glory
 to reflect its beams around.

This is the benevolent purpose, the generous
 design, of the institution for which I now plead.
 A design which it hath long been pursuing, with
 remarkable success, in the remote corners of our
 own isle.

It will be impossible for me, in the close of a
 discourse, to give you more than a very concise
 account of its origin and designs, its importance
 and utility. A few individuals, in the beginning
 of the last century, contemplating with sympathy
 the state of near three hundred thousands of their
 fellow-countrymen, immersed in ignorance, bar-
 barism, and superstition, strangers to the lan-
 guage, literature, arts, and improvements, of other
 parts of the British empire, formed the benevo-
 lent plan of sending among them religious school-
 masters and teachers, to promote their civiliza-
 tion and instruction, and introduce them (under
 the divine blessing) into the light and privileges
 of the Gospel. They wisely conceived that the
 most

most probable means of accomplishing these designs would be, to impress upon the minds of the rising generation the principles of Christian truth. From very small beginnings the Society have now established near three hundred schools under as many teachers, where about sixteen thousand scholars are annually instructed in the arts of civilized life, and the principles of the Protestant religion. And it is computed that near three hundred thousand have been under instruction in these schools, since their original establishment.

It is the first wish of the directors, that the most important of all concerns, the diffusion of gospel light and the knowledge of salvation, should ever be considered as the chief object of their attention. Their schoolmasters are therefore always directed to act as catechists to the neighbourhood where they are stationed ; and, besides conveying instruction to the children, to endeavor, by every means suitable to their character, by publicly catechising, and reading to the people on the Lord's day, when no other services are performed to impress the minds of all around them with religious truth. This is highly important in a country, where very little instruction beside can be obtained, owing to the great extent of the
parishes

parishes of 60 or 70 miles, intersected with mountains and arms of the sea, which prevent a regular and continued intercourse.

The Society also have, at a very great expence, printed editions of the bible in the Gaelic language, and have thus communicated to them the word of life in their native tongue.

To aid the exertions of such schoolmasters, missionary ministers have also been appointed by the Society, at certain stations, whose labors have been great and beneficial.

When we contemplate for a moment, such a number of children, snatched from ignorance and vice, trained up in the knowledge of Christian principles and duties, rising to communicate again the light of truth to their children, in a still more extended circle, we must confess that the advantages resulting from such an institution must be incalculable.

Under the influence of this Society, the very manners and dispositions of the inhabitants have been materially changed. It is perhaps principally, if not exclusively, owing to their efforts, that such a material difference is observed be-

tween them and the native Irish, though springing from one common origin ; whose language also they speak, and whose religion, if any, they originally professed. While the one, in the fury of a blinded zeal, has been committing acts of atrocity and murder, the recital of which has shocked our feelings, these have discovered a loyal attachment to their country and its constitution, and have clothed its arms with glory in distant parts of the world ; though little more than half a century ago (in the year 1745) under the influence of the same misguided zeal, they threw this country into confusion, and carried terror to the very capital.

It is a pleasing fact, that many, who would otherwise have been sunk in ignorance and vice, have risen, by the instruction received from this institution, to fill with honor the first stations in society ; and, what is infinitely more important, thousands are doubtless now in heaven, praising God for the benefit of its exertions.

But its benevolent efforts are not confined to its native soil. Besides their missionaries at home, under the patronage of this institution, the American Indian has been blest with the light of divine truth. And, whoever recollects the
piety,

piety, the labours, and the success of a *Brainerd*, whose exertions were directed and supported by this very Society, must feel the obligation to afford to it the utmost aid his abilities allow, and if he can no more—his prayers.

While we call upon you for some little of your abundance to promote the cause of Christ, let us hope that, the consideration of so many thousands, dependent upon the resources of this Society for the common means of instruction, will awaken your philanthropy, and quicken your zeal. And it ought to be remarked that, though the funds of this Society are great, their demands are still greater, and that many applications for new schools are annually rejected, through want of finances to supply their expence.—Embrace the present opportunity of benevolent exertion. Very soon every opportunity of thus honouring your Lord and Saviour will be passed away, never to be recalled. And, if regret could be felt in the world of glory, it would doubtless arise from the recollection of opportunities lost of glorifying the Redeemer, and promoting his cause upon earth; of how little we have done for the honour of him, to whom we are indebted for life and immortality.

Let

Let us then indulge the hope that you feel an holy ardor arising, to spread the knowledge of the Redeemer, and the blessings of his salvation, through the world. If you are acquainted with his glory and salvation, this is frequently the subject of your devout supplication, “*thy kingdom come.*” With your prayers employ your example and influence to promote its progress. Still continue these exertions. He that heareth prayer hath manifested his approbation, and has, no doubt, answered the prayers of many of his eminent servants of old, in that noble zeal and ardor, which he has of late excited among his professing people, in a variety of ways, to promote the knowledge of salvation through the earth. Not only, we trust, is this a token for good to the nation, but an earnest of fulfilling his promises in the recalling of his ancient people, and the glorious fulness of the Gentile world.

Animated then still more by what you see around you, add still further that pecuniary aid to the funds of this Society which your circumstances permit. Cast into the treasury of the Lord something that may sanctify your abundance, or that mite which may testify your love to his cause.

By

By the most feeble efforts, and feeble instruments, it often pleases the Almighty God to discover his power in collecting and extending his church. And to be in the least degree instrumental in forwarding so glorious a purpose, will be esteemed an higher honour in eternity than the acquisition of all earthly good.

Now then let that zeal, that love appear in the abundance of your liberality. Shew that the cause of Christ, not only in your own community, but in every community of Christians, is the object of your devout desire. And may the efforts of this Society, may the efforts which are now making amongst ourselves, and in the different societies of Christians, be crowned with success, by the Spirit of all grace and power; till "his kingdom come, and "his will be done on earth as it is in heaven: "till the knowledge of the Lord cover the earth "as the waters do the seas." O Lord, hasten it in thy time. Amen.

FINIS.

A S E R M O N,

&c.



A
S E R M O N

PREACHED AT THE PARISH CHURCH OF

St. Andrew by the Wardrobe and St. Anne, Blackfriars,

ON TUESDAY IN WHITSUN WEEK, MAY 19, 1812,

BEFORE THE

Society for Missions to Africa and the East,

INSTITUTED BY

MEMBERS OF THE ESTABLISHED CHURCH,

BEING THEIR

TWELFTH ANNIVERSARY.

BY

THE REV. WILLIAM GOODE, M. A.

RECTOR OF THE SAID UNITED PARISHES; LECTURER OF ST. JOHN OF WAPPING;
AND LADY CAMDEN'S TUESDAY EVENING LECTURER AT THE
CHURCH OF ST. LAWRENCE-JEWRY.

LONDON:

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1812.

A
S E R M O N, &c.

PSALM LXXII. 17.

AND MEN SHALL BE BLESSED IN HIM : ALL NATIONS
SHALL CALL HIM BLESSED.

MY CHRISTIAN BRETHREN—

WE are met together this morning, for the promoting of an object, not only of no common magnitude; but by far the most important, that can occupy the attention, or engage the united energies of the Church of God:—an object, in the promoting of which, *Angels which excel in strength, which do the commandments of the Lord, who hearken to the voice of His word, those ministers of His which do His pleasure*, even the brightest SERAPHIM before the throne, would esteem it their highest honour to be employed. —It is my appointed duty, to endeavour to excite your rising zeal into higher fervour in this work of sacred benevolence—the sending forth of

the Ambassadors of heaven, to proclaim through earth the message of reconciliation between God and Man—to bear the glad tidings of salvation to a ruined world—and to open before the dying sons of men the scriptural prospects of *life and immortality*.

Your prayer will, I doubt not, aid my efforts ; and engage that divine assistance which can render the weakest instrument effective, to accomplish the most important purposes of Jehovah's grace—In this confidence I enter upon my task, and to this blessing I commit my services.

When the great Redeemer of mankind had completed his undertaking on earth, when his own personal ministry was ended and he was about to ascend to his Father, he delegated to his disciples the work of continuing the ministry of reconciliation to man ; and commanded them, as his final charge, to preach *this Gospel to every creature*. Animated with love to their Divine Master, and fired with zeal for the salvation of mankind, they immediately girt themselves for the undertaking. No dangers affrighted them—no difficulties deterred them. In a few years the Jew and the Greek, the polished nations of the Roman Empire, and even the barbarous in-

habitants of the British Isles, had heard from them, or by their means, the Gospel of their Salvation.

The execution of this command appears, indeed, to have been the chief object, which invariably animated the holy ardour of primitive Christians. But—too soon, alas! softened by prosperity, and therefore relaxing in their zeal, the rulers and the members of the Church, either forgot, or became indifferent to the last and most benevolent mandate of their Lord; and indisposed to that self-denial, and boldness of enterprize, which were necessary for its fulfilment. Satisfied, therefore, with promoting the interest of their own peculiar churches, the Gentile Nations no longer excited their attention, nor witnessed their benevolent exertions to enlighten their darkness, or to save their souls. Hence the rapid progress of the Gospel was impeded. Christianity, instead of receiving fresh acquisitions to its cause, lost the ground which it had gained; and the universal influence of Christian Truth, so suited in its nature to promote the general benefit of man, was prejudiced and delayed.

Never, since those happy times, hath any spirit of Christian enterprize arisen, worthy of

the Church, or of the glorious cause in which it is engaged. The REFORMATION itself found sufficient employment for the apostolic instruments by which it was effected, in the country in which it first arose: nor could the Reformed Churches be expected to direct their attention further, till their own domestic peace and security were confirmed.

A few solitary instances, therefore, excepted; and some bold attempts of the Romish Church, directed, it is to be feared, more for secular advantage than for the promoting of true Christianity; the Missionary Spirit has been suffered to sleep, since the times of primitive love and zeal, without any suitable attempts, to arouse it to renewed exertions.

We reverence the venerable Societies, their names shall be recorded with honour to the latest posterity, which kept the dying spark of Missionary Zeal alive, and which prevented its entire extinction, when buried under the general forgetfulness of all the Protestant Churches. But shall we not hail, with peculiar delight and gratitude, the present times, when Christians in general appear to be awaking from their long slumber; and are preparing themselves again to execute their Lord's command?—Shall we

not meet, with solemn attention and holy gratitude, the present providential circumstances of the world, so eventful and so uncommon, which appear to urge it more and more upon the Christian community to excite the reviving spark into a flame?—Shall we not entreat the heavenly wisdom from above, which may enable us zealously to watch over it, and wisely to direct its progress?

To aim at novelty in the present state of Missionary Information would be absurd. It will therefore be my object, only to collect and delineate to your view, in the simplicity of truth, some of the leading blessings of our common Christianity: those blessings, which it reaches forth with the hand of mercy to mankind; and to which it solicits their attention, in the most persuasive language of INVITATION and of PROMISE, wherever its heavenly sounds are heard—blessings, which alone can restore, and which will increase, and finally consummate the happiness of man. This, we apprehend, will most effectually excite our gratitude, for our own unspeakable mercies; and inspire and provoke into activity the sacred purpose, of diffusing the knowledge of those mercies to mankind. Though immersed in ignorance, *without*

Christ, without hope, and without God in the world, they are but companions with us in rebellion and transgression :—nor are they sunk the least beneath us, by nature, in the guilt or ruin of the fall ; while we know that they are equally capable of rising, even from their lowest degradation to those glorious felicities, to which the Gospel hath elevated our hopes.

Let us then awake to the generous attempt. Our zeal may be animated, and our perseverance sustained, under every discouragement, by the recollection, that, however feeble and unpromising the beginnings, we anticipate with confidence the certainty of ultimate success. We know, that, in the fulness of the Prophetic times, by some means which the providence of God shall develop, *Men shall be blessed in HIM : all nations shall call HIM blessed.*

The subject will now engage our attention, under the following considerations—

I. The only MEDIUM which God hath appointed of blessedness to a fallen World.

II. The BLESSINGS which, through this medium, are to be communicated to mankind.

III. The MEANS, in the connection of causes and events, which Christians are called upon to use, in order to warrant their expectation of the accomplishment of these predicted purposes of God.

IV. The peculiar GROUNDS OF HOPE, which may encourage our exertions, in the present times, to diffuse the knowledge of Christianity through the Earth.

In these considerations, inspire, O HOLY SPIRIT, that heavenly ardour in the love of Christ, which shall further the noble object of our present meeting ! Let that sacred flame, which thy providence and thy power have already kindled in thy Church, burn with a brighter lustre, and glow with a more generous warmth ! Yea, O Lord God, let it spread from nation to nation and from land to land, increasing in its energies and extent as it proceeds through time, till the benevolent command of the Redeemer shall be universally fulfilled, and the promise be universally accomplished !——

I. Our first Enquiry relates to

THE ONLY MEDIUM, WHICH GOD HATH APPOINTED OF BLESSEDNESS TO A FALLEN WORLD.

“ Men shall be blessed in HIM.”

The person here spoken of, no doubt, is HE, who, in his humiliation, is the *seed of the Woman*, the *seed of Abraham*, the *Son of David* ; who, in his mediatorial character, for the benefit of mankind, is the SON OF GOD *incarnate* ; “ IMMANUEL, GOD *with us* ;” “ JEHOVAH *become our salvation* ;” He, who is truly “ the *child born* and the *Son given*,” but as truly the MIGHTY GOD, the EVERLASTING FATHER, whose *name* is WONDERFUL !

The blessedness which was deposited in the first Adam, as the head of the first creation, being lost, it pleased God to appoint a sovereign constitution of grace, for the redemption of man ; at the head of which he placed his ONLY BEGOTTEN SON ; that, in his incarnation, by the merit of his atoning death might be obtained, — that, in his resurrection, by him as the accepted mediator might be communicated, — and that, in his exaltation to the throne, from his hand alone might be bestowed, all the blessings of Salvation. Hence *it pleased the Father, that in HIM should all fulness dwell*—all grace and efficiency to restore a ruined world. As, from the natural Sun, all life, beauty, and verdure are communicated through creation ; so,

from HIM, as *the Sun of Righteousness*, are diffused all spiritual life, grace, and glory, through the new creation, the Church of God.

In every dispensation of God to man, the eye of spiritual discernment beholds this object prominent and supreme. It marks an increasing development of the first promise, till its actual fulfilment; till, *behold, a Virgin conceives and bears a Son*; and, by the peculiar concurrence of providential circumstances, in the accomplishment of ancient prophecies, lays her infant first-born, wrapped in swaddling bands, in the manger, in the long predicted Town of Bethlehem.

THIS INCARNATION of one, who is the Son of God, is the cardinal point of Revelation. Ever since the first promise, it constituted the glorious expectation of Patriarchs and of Prophets. And, by the Apostle St. John, this alone is spoken of as the whole of Christianity; because it implies the union of the divine and human natures in the one person of Immanuel, and includes in itself all the work for which that incarnation was designed.

In the language of Bishop Horsley*—"The disobedience of our first parents was nothing

* Posthumous Sermons, Vol. I. Page 170.

less, than a confederacy with the apostate spirit, against the sovereign authority of GOD; and if such offenders are spared, by such a Sovereign, it must be in a way which shall unite the perfection of mercy, with the perfection of justice; for in God mercy and justice must be equally perfect." He, then, who becomes the BLESSER of sinners, must become their SURETY; and he, who becomes their Surety, though appearing in the form of man, that he may suffer and obey, must possess a dignity far beyond, to give to those sufferings and to that obedience a suitable merit, and to secure to the divine perfections their unabated honour, by offering an adequate atonement for the sins of men.

We learn then from Scripture—and from Scripture alone, fully authenticated as the Word of God, we implicitly receive every article of our faith—that the design of his appearance in our nature, was, *to give his life a ransom for many—to make atonement for transgression—to become a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare the righteousness of God in the forgiveness of our sins, which are passed, through his forbearance—that God may be JUST, and the JUSTIFIER of him, who believeth in Jesus.* It is the foundation and the glorious peculiarity of Christian Truth, that, *He died, the just FOR the unjust—*

that *he was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities—that the chastisement of our peace was upon him—that the Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all.* Hence, *we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of our sins—*And since, in him, mercy and truth meet together, righteousness and peace embrace each other; on this ground, God is, not only merciful and gracious, but **RIGHTEOUS** and **JUST** to *forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all iniquity.*

It needs little argument to prove, that, if a work like this be necessary for the salvation of man, OR DETERMINED IN THE APPOINTMENT OF GOD, no man alone, however perfect and endowed, no Angel though becoming incarnate, could ever have accomplished it: none but *He, who being in the form of God, took upon himself the form of a servant—* none but *the word, which was with God, and was God—* none but *God manifest in the flesh.* “The incarnation of the Son of God was, therefore, essential to the atonement of man’s guilt, by the shedding of his blood. On the other side, the need there was for such an atonement, is the only cause that can be assigned, which could induce the SON OF GOD to stoop to be made man*.” To HIM alone it

* Bishop Horsley, Vol. I. Page 173.

belongs to reconcile the justice of God with the salvation of sinners; but of the ability of one so wonderfully constituted, no doubt can be entertained.

The records of many of the Heathen Nations have preserved the corrupted tradition of this amazing event: no doubt, as the remains of the first promise, or of some of the repeated intimations of it to the primitive patriarchs. The incarnations of a Veeshnu, with various other similar fables of the Heathen World, are but distorted, corrupted, or impious vestiges of this grand subject of Revelation. Yet, though absurd and contemptible in themselves, they may nevertheless, be considered, to the confounding of Infidelity, as collateral proofs of THE ORIGINAL AND GENERAL EXPECTATION OF MANKIND. They may ultimately be rendered useful, in the providence of God, in convincing the nations who have retained them of the truth of Christianity, as bringing to their knowledge the unadulterated facts, so essential in revealed religion, which the ignorance and corruption of mankind have so miserably perverted and debased.

Here, then, in the incarnation of the Son of God, and the work of his redemption, we behold the way effectually opened for our return to

God. We contemplate, in Him, the sentence of exclusion taken off; the divine favour regained, consistently with the honour of the divine perfections; the means effected, whereby the image of God may be restored on the heart of man; and the hope of life and immortality ennobling his prospects, as *the free gift of God in Jesus Christ our Lord*. So wonderful is the preparation in Jehovah's counsels of love, that *men may be blessed in him; till all nations shall call him blessed*.

But if all the blessedness of man centre in Christ, then it necessarily follows, that the Gospel, and the promulgation of that Gospel, must be the greatest blessing which can be offered to mankind. For the Gospel is *the testimony of Christ*. To preach that Gospel is to testify of Christ. Every part of its doctrine must have relation to HIM: every hope of the sinner must be grounded on HIM: and the purest morality will flow from the knowledge of HIM, and from union with HIM, in the influence of his grace, and under the powerful efficacy of his love. Thus the Apostles went forth *preaching Christ*. Thus was the world at first brought to *the obedience of faith*. The glorious era of the great Reformation commenced with the revival of the same heavenly doctrine, which alone can renew

the same effects on the heart of man, and convert the nations to his name. No partial, no accommodated testimony to the depraved state or prejudices of human nature, can ever be honoured, by God, with so great a benefit: for with the faithful and decided declaration, alone, of the essential truth of God, the promise of his Spirit is connected.

The Christian Preacher will, therefore, insist on the Redeemer's glories; the dignity of his divine nature; the perfection of his human nature; and the wonders of his mediatorial person, in which they both unite. He will exhibit the design of his undertaking, the completion of his work, and the honour of all the divine attributes in its execution. He will proclaim the reconciliation of offended Majesty, and the free offers of mercy to offending sinners: the work of the ETERNAL SPIRIT in the regeneration of the soul—the need of repentance,—the efficacy of faith,—and the necessity of holiness, in heart and in life, as the evidence of their truth. He will especially delineate the nature, and urge the necessity of faith, as that which alone unites the sinner with his Saviour, and receives the virtue of his Cross. But he will decidedly maintain, that that faith alone produces these benefits, which, arising from a cordial approbation of all the parts of the great plan

of salvation, humbles the sinner before the throne of the Divine Majesty, gives all the glory of his justification to the merit of the Saviour, works effectually in the love of Christ, and therefore necessarily becomes fruitful in every good word and deed to his glory. The pardon and justification of a sinner will thus be represented as dependent only on the work of redemption, completed by the Mediator, in his atoning death and perfect obedience ; the regeneration and sanctification of a sinner, on the promised operation of the Holy Spirit ; and both of these, as necessarily productive of those corresponding tempers, which lead to and secure the enjoyment of salvation.

The pardon of iniquity will thus appear as the first step in bringing the sinner back to God ; in correcting the depraved passions of a fallen nature, purifying it from the corruption that is in the world through lust, and raising it in its disposition and desires to the nature of the heavenly felicity. The grand plan will be discovered as advancing in the power of faith, under the Spirit of the Lord, from glory to glory ; till all the ignorance, guilt, and misery of man be changed for heavenly knowledge, perfect purity, and happiness unmixed, complete, and everlasting, in the presence, likeness, and enjoyment

of the holy and blessed God, throughout eternity.

I know not whether to apologize, on the one hand, for so imperfect a sketch of the leading features of Christianity; or, on the other, for trespassing so long on the patience of this congregation, in the review of such acknowledged truths. But it seemed to me proper to premise so much, and it may perhaps be needless to say more, on this occasion, to introduce the following consideration:

II. THE BLESSINGS, WHICH THE GREAT REDEEMER BESTOWS ; WHICH, IN HIS GOSPEL, ARE PROPOSED TO ALL MANKIND ; AND WHICH INVARIABLY FOLLOW THE KNOWLEDGE AND CORDIAL ACCEPTANCE OF THAT GOSPEL, IN EVERY NATION.

Happiness is the great pursuit of mankind. Infidelity itself must give us the credit, that, in endeavouring to diffuse the knowledge of the Gospel, it is at least our DESIGN to increase the general happiness of man. The only question then between us must be: Are we pursuing the object, in the use of those means which are suited to the end proposed?

It has been objected, that Christianity is not

suited to the customs, the manners, the habits, or the local circumstances of many nations: and that their own idolatrous superstitions are more adapted for their general benefit. But, without enquiring into those customs, manners, habits, or local circumstances, we will venture to assert, that it is not necessary even to be acquainted with them, to determine the question; much less to refute the objections arising from them. We stand upon a broader ground, which no argument of this nature can affect. We assume it as a FACT, that CHRISTIANITY IS THE RELIGION OF GOD. We assume it as a TRUTH, that CHRISTIANITY IS DESIGNED BY GOD, for THE GENERAL HAPPINESS OF ALL NATIONS OF THE EARTH. If, then, Infinite Wisdom cannot mistake in adapting its means to its end, the Gospel must be suited to man in every age, in every clime, in every possible situation. It must be adapted to the happiness and perfection of his whole nature, both body and soul. It must be fitted to meet his varied wants, as a creature and as a sinner. It must correspond with his varied capacities of knowledge, action, or enjoyment as an intelligent immortal. There can be no situation, no state of man, no local circumstances of any nation on earth, but must ultimately be improved by the knowledge and reception of the Gospel.

If, moreover, the Gospel be the channel, in the sovereign determination of God, of communicating these blessings, then to convey the knowledge of the Gospel to heathen lands, is to convey to them a benefit of inestimable value. Ignorance and depravity may be unable to appreciate the worth of the gift; but gratitude and thankfulness will follow the perception and enjoyment of it.

Christian Philanthropy, then, imperiously urges our most strenuous exertions to promote this great object. It excites us, by the most powerful obligations of duty, and the tenderest feelings of enlightened compassion, to reverence the authority of our Master, and to obey with delight that most admirable of his precepts, *to do to others, as we would have others do to us*. To decline the arduous but honourable task, through senseless indifference, selfish indulgence, or worldly policy—to persuade ourselves that we need not be concerned about the welfare of the different races of mankind, while they themselves are satisfied with their situation; though we know them to be degraded by ignorance and vice, and still more awfully degraded, as destitute of *the knowledge of the true God, and our only Saviour, Jesus Christ*, is too much like the murderous apathy of him, who insulted the Divine

Majesty with the question, *Am I my brother's keeper?* and may perhaps meet, from him, with a similar reward.

But, if these principles be true, we affirm still further, that, to oppose the promulgation of Christianity, by arguments drawn from these local circumstances, or from the reasons of human prudence, is nothing less than to assume, that the narrow policy of mortals is more suited to promote the welfare of the human race, than the plan of the Omniscient Mind—that the infinite wisdom of God mistakes in its means of bestowing blessedness on his creatures—in a word, that God himself knows not how best to govern the world which he has made, since possible circumstances may arise, and have arisen, which may render his plan improper for execution, in various situations; and unsuitable to the general happiness of man.

Till we can adopt conclusions so absurd—till we can join in these impious reflections on the moral government of God, we cannot entertain a doubt, but that the promoting of the knowledge of the Gospel, is the most exalted work of piety—the noblest enterprise of humanity—and the highest act of beneficence, at which the benevolent mind can aim: we hesitate not to

affirm, that the accomplishing of the object would be the general felicity of the world.

Independently of those eternal blessings, which it prepares for the immortal soul, in the knowledge of God and the hope of eternal life, Christianity has never failed to elevate the condition of man; and to become the parent of innumerable advantages to society, wherever it has been made known. It may confidently be asked, "HAS CHRISTIANITY EVER DONE ANY HARM?" The state of those nations, which were once destitute of its light, contrasted with the state of those same nations, when enlightened by its beams, might convince a candid mind, however ignorant of the nature and value of its spiritual benefits, of the importance of communicating the knowledge of Christianity through the earth, if it were for no other purpose, than to exalt the social state of man.

Here the appeal to fact is most conclusive. The fascinating descriptions of the simplicity, purity, and happiness of many heathen nations, which the enemies of Christianity have so often delineated with exulting gratification, have always been proved, by the knowledge of the facts, to be the offspring of ignorance, of prejudice, or of falsehood; and wherever the Gospel has

been unknown, men, overwhelmed in the darkness of idolatry, have been debased in their morals, brutal in their pleasures, and cruel in their practices. And the more accurate investigation of the manners and customs of those nations, which have been considered as the most humane, gentle, and inoffensive, have always discovered, still more decidedly, that *the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty.*

Such once was Britain! If such it be not now, whence this change?—from the influence of Christianity. It was the religion of the conquered, which civilized the barbarous nations that deluged Europe, in the overthrow of the Roman Empire; and soon united the conquerors and the conquered together, in the bonds of social harmony, and in a constantly improving state of civil order and Christian legislation. It is the light of Revelation alone, which, in some form or other, directly or indirectly, hath ever enlightened, civilized, or blessed mankind. And, in proportion as Christianity has diffused itself through any nation in a purer form, the standard of morals has been raised to a higher elevation: the civil, political, and moral state of society has approximated to its perfection; and the general happiness been promoted and secured.

Why then should Christianity ever be suspected of producing opposite effects ; in contradiction to the uninterrupted experience of ages and generations? No! Were there no future state, no hope of immortality revealed in the Gospel, humanity and tender compassion to the present miserable state of man, would excite us to promulgate its moral code throughout the earth.

The Christian mind frequently contemplates, with delight, the salutary changes which would take place, in a disordered and distracted world, were but the Gospel universally known and generally received. It contemplates, with rapture, a time, which certainly will arrive, when the Gospel shall thus be known and received, and these salutary changes shall bless the world. Through that medium, which prophetic vision opens to the eye of faith, it views the various revolutions of times and of empires, leading to this grand and gratifying consummation—when *the moral wilderness shall become a fruitful field, and the desert rejoice and blossom as the rose: when the excellency of Carmel and of Sharon shall be given to it: when they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God.*

Shall we anticipate for a few moments some of these social and moral changes? .

Then no longer, says the pious Christian, shall the innumerable tribes, the millions of wandering savages, rove the inhospitable wilderness, ignorant of every thing but sensual indulgence, and hardened to brutal ferocity; but, enlightened by the rays of truth and wisdom, softened to domestic tenderness and social virtues, they shall spread their peaceful habitations in the cultivated desert:—the partakers also, with us, of the influence and hopes of the Gospel.

No more shall the deified Ganges embrace, in its watery grave, the thousands and tens of thousands of devoted infants: nor the hand, not of the murderous assassin, but of the tender NURSE, or the tenderer MOTHER, devote the female offspring to death, the victim to the baleful influence of human vanity and pride. The peaceful waters of the baptismal font shall rather devote them to their Lord and ours; and consecrate a rising race, to people and to bless the nations.

No more shall the disconsolate and weeping widow be compelled, by a delusive superstition, or the fear of shame, to ascend the funeral pile of her departed husband; to surrender up her life with his, amidst the horrid shouts, that drown her feeble and dying cries: but, blessed with the hopes of the Gospel, with patient resig-

nation she shall submit to the decree of heaven, and wait a happier union with him whom she mourns, in the land where death shall be no more.

No more shall the idol, ponderous car of Juggernaut crush beneath its wheel the ignorant devotee, who thus sacrifices his body for the salvation of his soul. Nor shall the innumerable absurdities and cruelties, which pagan superstition has devised to appease its wrathful deities, deceive their miserable deluded votaries; exchanged for the milder doctrines, the more benevolent precepts, and the sure and sublimer hopes of the religion of Jesus.

No longer shall the rites of human sacrifice, which have slain their thousands and tens of thousands of mankind, stain the smoking altars with blood; when faith has once directed the anxious penitent to the GREAT SACRIFICE, which *hath for ever taken away sin.*

Here the Christian stands; and triumphantly asks: "Is it not an act of more than human kindness, to offer these blessings, and innumerable others of a similar nature, inseparably connected with the reception of Christianity, to the Heathen World?" To aim at effecting such

changes, must surely be the act of the most noble benevolence: the system which can produce them, must be the BLESSER OF THE WORLD!

But we appeal to its enemies. We appeal again to fact.

The state of Christian Communities, compared with those which are destitute of the knowledge of Christianity, affords an incontrovertible proof of its benign influence. Nor can the various evils, which are observed in such communities, be justly attributed to the system which they profess, but to the defects of its professors. The candid observer will see the origin of those evils, in the opposing corrupt principles of human nature, and the consequently diminished influence of Christianity on the practice of those, whose judgments are overpowered by the convincing evidence of its truth.

But, how advantageous soever, these changes may be, in meliorating the social state of man, by the Christian they are considered as of very inferior moment, in comparison of those nobler blessings of Christianity, which affect the immortal soul, and rise into eternity. He considers Christianity as *the wisdom and the power*

of God; to restore a guilty creature, to the tenderest mercies and the highest favour of his Creator: to elevate mankind again, however degraded in vice and sunk in misery, to the renewed image of his Maker on earth, and to the perfection of created moral excellency in his presence above: or, in the language of Revelation, to open their eyes, to bring them out of darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God; that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified, by faith which is in Christ Jesus.

Christianity is a remedy for the state of man, as delineated in Scripture, and exhibited in the experience of all ages: as a fallen guilty creature, depraved in his heart, irregular in his passions, and under the usurped dominion of the prince of darkness. This we must never forget, if we would properly estimate the value of the Gospel. The evidences of this humiliating fact, forced themselves on the mind of some of the more enlightened heathen; who acknowledged the depraved condition of human nature, though they understood not its origin, its extent, or its cure. Their imperfect systems therefore of morality, or schools of philosophy, offered nothing for the relief of a guilty conscience; and very little, and that little totally inadequate, for the

improvement of the heart. *The world by wisdom knew not God*, when it pleased God, by the mystery of the cross, and *the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believed*. But the mystery of the cross, with the foolishness of preaching, soon triumphed over every obstacle, and the Gospel, in its first display, effected the most complete revolution in the sentiments, the tempers, and the conduct of those who received its message. And why? Because it was the instrument of God, accompanied by the influence of the Holy Ghost, enlightening the understanding, convincing the conscience, and renovating the heart. Hence, though offensive to corrupted nature, through its humiliating doctrine, it was found to be *the power of God unto salvation to all them who believed*. The same Gospel, with its accompanying power, will ever produce the same effect. But nothing less—nothing beside—will regenerate or save mankind.

As the Gospel is the glorious plan of the Eternal Jehovah, so to every enlightened mind it appears worthy of himself: since in it all the perfections of the Godhead are magnified, while the most satisfactory testimony of forgiving mercy is communicated to the trembling penitent. Here truth and justice still maintain their highest glory, and the most awful proofs of the

deep malignity of sin arise, from the very method which divine wisdom hath taken to bestow the abundance of divine grace. The guilty conscience finds hope, and *peace, and joy in believing*, through the all-sufficiency of the sacrifice—the infinity of the atonement—the complete redemption of the Lord our Saviour, in that wonderful preparation of divine love: and the pardoned sinner learns to reverence the holiness and majesty of the great Governor of the World. When the SON OF GOD, in the sacrifice of his cross, becomes the Redeemer of Mankind; when he bows his anointed head and dies, because *the Lord laid on Him the iniquity of us all*; the believer adores the justice of the lawgiver, in the sanctions of his holy law: he learns that sin shall not go unpunished, though resting, only by imputation, on the Son of his love; and thus beholds the highest exaltation of divine mercy, as, at the same time, the highest exaltation of divine justice! How awfully is his mind affected, at the Cross, with the malignity of his transgressions; while he beholds, in its solemn scenes, a heavenly sacrifice, a complete atonement,—and triumphs in the confidence of pardon, and everlasting deliverance!

These are the views, which, by the accompanying energies of the Spirit of God, begin to

raise the degenerated nature of man, out of the ruins of the fall. The doctrine of the Cross, thus understood, and received into the conscience and the heart, humbles and yet cheers the sinner; diffuses the most benign influence to rectify his passions, and to correct his vices; and affords a salutary and certain remedy for all the diseases of the mind. The knowledge of his Creator, of himself, and of a future state, which thus opens to his view, arising from the solemn transactions of the Cross, and enforced by them, becomes the principle of a new, a holy, and a heavenly life. The motives, the hopes, the objects which here present themselves to the mind are such, as cannot fail, when really believed, to influence and purify the heart. The obligations which the Gospel enforces, from an infinite series of divine philanthropy, displayed in the person, and consummated at the cross of Christ, are such as delightfully constrain the affections to the love of God. While its rich provision secures the sinner's pardon, and insures his title to the inheritance of glory, the sacred consciousness of such a heavenly possession ennobles and elevates the soul above the degrading influence of earthly passions, and exalts its affections beyond the various distracting scenes of earthly ambition, into the higher regions of peace, of purity, and of love. In a

word: *The grace of God, which bringeth salvation, teaches to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour, Jesus Christ.*

But the Gospel offers, what no other system ever did, or can offer:—a PERFECT EXAMPLE of all its precepts: the living copy of moral perfection, of consummate virtue, in the Man Christ Jesus. It thus presents to the believer, the most powerful and kindly persuasive argument to that holiness, which conforms the principles of the mind, the affections of the heart, and the practice of the life, to the will of God.

The Gospel, however, affords still more. For, as the religion of God, it is the testimony of the Spirit. His promised influences attend its administration, and render it *the power of God* unto the salvation of sinners, wherever its light is diffused, and its doctrines promulgated. Such was the power which attended its original declaration; nor ought our expectation to be less, IN ALL THINGS WHICH PERTAIN TO THE KNOWLEDGE OF SALVATION; since we have the same promises to rest on, and the same faithfulness is engaged to perform those promises, when-

ever, in obedience to our Lord and Master, we send or go forth *to preach this Gospel to every creature*. The promise of the Spirit, in his attending grace and influence, forms the distinguishing superiority of Christian Truth; and will ever distinguish it from all the theories of man, *as the power of God*.

Let us then, for a moment, suppose the Christian doctrine and precepts to have their full influence on the heart: and let us enquire what will be the result. Behold, the penitent is consoled with the confidence of pardon, and rejoices in the love of God! The Christian character is formed after the bright example of its Author. Faith, hope and love, with zeal and holy devotion, virtues purely Christian, inspire the heart. Meekness, humility, and purity of mind, virtues unknown but to Christianity, secure the peaceful and harmonious exercise of the relative and domestic duties. While justice, temperance, fortitude, and prudence, confirmed by the motives and obligations of the Gospel, adorn the social character, and ensure universal order and tranquillity.

Such is CHRISTIANITY!—Would not then the general diffusion of a system so transforming, attended with such a regenerating power be a

general blessing to mankind? Its effects, indeed, at present are but partial and imperfect, interrupted by the corrupt propensities of a fallen nature; but, in proportion as its influence prevails, amidst all the opposing principles of human depravity, these happy results are even now beheld. Let its influence be universally experienced, and there will need no more, to realize the enchanting descriptions of the Prophets. The lion and the lamb, the leopard and the kid, will lie down together: the sword will be beaten into the ploughshare, and the spear into the pruning-hook: the furious passions, now rushing forward to destruction and slaughter, will no longer terrify and alarm the earth: refreshing peace, with triumphant exultation will spread its wings over the conflicting nations, and men will learn war no more. The happiness of earth will then be the foretaste and the pledge of the happiness of heaven; and will run on, increasing and accumulating as it flows through time, till it shall be absorbed in the *exceeding great and eternal weight of glory!*

On these grounds, the Christian triumphs in the pre-eminent advantages of his dispensation; but, with holy philanthropy, would unfold to others the sources of his joy. "Christianity," says he, "is my wisdom, let it be my aim to

make others wise unto salvation. Christianity is my honour: gladly would I see the whole race of fallen sinners participating with me the dignity of its state. Christianity is my happiness: let that happiness be extended to all around. Christianity is the only solace of my mind, under all the trials of life and in the near view of death: Oh, Thou Heavenly Comforter, let the various sorrows of mankind be alleviated or removed by the consolations of thy heavenly doctrine."—Thus, surveying with commiserating pity the awful state of the heathen world, debased in superstition and cruelties, and sunk into pollution and wretchedness, the Christian longs to communicate the knowledge of his Redeemer, and of his salvation, to the utmost ends of the earth. He feels his sacred joy advanced to its highest pitch, in the assurance, that, in the fulness of time, *Men shall be blessed in HIM, all nations shall call HIM blessed.*—But we proceed to consider

III. WHAT ARE THE MEANS, IN THE CONNECTION OF CAUSES AND EVENTS, WHICH CHRISTIANS ARE CALLED ON TO USE IN ORDER TO WARRANT THEIR EXPECTATION OF THE ACCOMPLISHMENT OF THESE PREDICTED PURPOSES OF GOD.

As this subject has oftentimes before been

urged on you from this place, I will aim to be as concise as the subject will allow. It is my only wish, to renew some of those feelings of sacred ardour, which we have before felt so warmly kindling in our bosoms.

Here then let it be distinctly stated, that Christianity disclaims coercion. It knows no force, but the force of argument and of truth. It disdains all unnatural alliance with the fiery zeal of superstition; satisfied that its only legitimate weapon, is its own refulgent light. It confidently contends, however, for a community of rights with the dogmas of human invention. It claims the liberty and the opportunity of making known, to those who sit in darkness, its doctrines, its morals, and its blessings. It demands, with the authority of its Divine Author, the privilege of explaining the grounds on which it rests, the arguments by which it is supported, and the advantages by which it recommends itself to the attention of mankind. It is well assured, that, when its nature and its claims are fairly stated, and candidly compared with the immoralities and cruelties of the most humane superstition, it must carry conviction to the understanding, and, by the influence of that grace which is its promised attendant, renovate and

meliorate the heart : like those irradiating beams of light, the irresistible force of which no human power can impede ; but whose benign force we welcome with gratitude, as scattering the delusive visions of the night, and bringing to observation the realities of nature, the objects of the day.

The peculiar means, then, which we are called on to use, for this purpose, are, doubtless, the same means as those, which were originally employed, in propagating the knowledge of Christ —the DISPERSION OF THE WORD OF GOD, and the PREACHING OF HIS TRUTH. *Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature*, is a standing precept to the Christian Church. For, *how shall they call on him, in whom they have not believed ? how shall they believe in him, of whom they have not heard ? and how shall they hear without a Preacher ?* A Christian Missionary is, therefore, a necessary agent, in promulgating the doctrine of Christ. Such were the Evangelists of primitive times. An order eagerly embraced by those, whose love was the warmest, whose zeal was the most ardent, whose grace was the most conspicuous, and whose talents and abilities for usefulness were the most eminent and commanding. These stood with Apostles,

the first in the glorious armies of the Lord: the first in dangers, in sufferings, and in labours; and the first, in estimation, in the Church of Christ.

The age of learned Christianity was not then arrived. But, alas! however excellent the attainment of human learning, however necessary for MANY in the present state of the Church, how little have all the attainments of literature effected, for the extension of genuine Christianity, in comparison of what was effected by that heavenly purity and patient zeal, that holy love and gentle meekness, that fortitude of hope and wisdom of divine illumination, which then so much better supplied its place! Had this piety and zeal continued, directing its powers to the enlightening of the heathen nations, *their sound would literally have soon gone out into all lands, and their words unto the ends of the world.* Remember then, my Christian Brethren, that, if the same effects are to be produced, the same tempers must be revived: instruments of the like description must again be sent forth to evangelize the nations: the same divine truth must be carried with the like heavenly simplicity and zeal to the ears of men, commended to their attention by similar purity, meekness, fortitude, and wisdom, in dependance upon the same in-

fluence of God the HOLY GHOST, to favour and prosper the attempt.

But where shall we look for such instruments as these? As yet, alas! they have been seen but thinly scattered through the Church of Christ. Few, very few have appeared with such talents and dispositions to occupy the missionary field. As the providence of God, however, appears, in the present time, to be opening extensive prospects, and calling forth to such great and honourable exertions, we will not, we ought not to despair. It seems suitable to the general dispensation of the wisdom and the power of God, having afforded opportunities unknown before, and disposed the hearts of his servants to contemplate them with delight and ardour, that he should, in his own time, raise up and adapt his agents to accomplish the design. Let us then especially employ that means, to which the Redeemer hath directed us: let us pray the Lord of the harvest, he who hath the hearts of all men in his hands, that he would form for himself, and send forth in his providence, such labourers, into a field so inconceivably extensive, and which now appears ripening for the harvest.

The various associations, which have lately

been formed, for the accomplishing of this mighty object, waiting for the grand event, of which prophecies, and promises, and providences concur to raise their expectation, have not been left altogether destitute of instruments, suitable instruments, for the work. They discern, laid by their hands, the foundation of a structure, which shall doubtless extend its basis, and rise into spiritual beauty and glory through all the earth. But patient expectation, unwearied activity, unabating zeal, zeal undismayed by apparent failure even in many of the most promising enterprizes, and especially prayer without ceasing, are the true characteristics of missionary exertions. The expectation, however, which is accompanied with the prayer of faith, shall never be ultimately disappointed. The Lord who can do it, will doubtless incline the hearts of many, and qualify them for the arduous and honourable work.

We, of this Society, wish to see the Missionary ardour kindling in our own Church, among some of its candidates for the ministerial office, who, being at present disengaged from the obligation, which the providence of God has imposed on others, in situations of usefulness, might justly esteem it their highest honour to be thus designated and employed.

Had the same opportunities of extensive usefulness been presented, had the same facilities of entering on them been afforded, had the same motives for engaging in them been advanced, to their elder Brethren, when unoccupied in such stations, I venture to believe that some of them would have welcomed the prospect with holy ardour ; would have acknowledged with gratitude the hand of God, in placing before them such a field of labour and of honour ; and would have answered to the call of providence, *Here am I, send me.* Their various and necessary engagements now detach them from the service ; but their hearts, their counsels, and their prayers will attend those, who, in these times of most peculiar aspect, are stirred up to offer themselves to the work of the Lord ; who concur with his providence, in the fulfilment of his promise, to diffuse his Gospel through the earth.

But, while we lament the want of holy zeal and ardour in the Missionary Cause ; yet it must be observed, that it is not every ebullition of zeal, which a wise man or a prudent society can countenance or encourage. The first effervescence of religious zeal has oftentimes quickly excited an ardour, which has as quickly subsided ; and would frequently make men, ministers or missionaries, who would be found very inefficient

and unsuitable in the course of trial. It is not every David, who is called to wield the sword of a Goliath. Nor was it said without reason by the Apostle, *not a novitiate, lest, being lifted up with pride, he fall into the snare of the devil*. When such novitiates in Christianity hastily deem themselves capable of wielding the mighty *sword of the Spirit*, when such infants in the Christian Life conceive their feeble shoulder able to sustain the weight of the most important function, little effect has been ultimately produced by a fervour so premature and unchastised. At this sacred calling, many of the holy Fathers of the Primitive Church trembled ; and from this, conscious of the great responsibility of the cure of souls and the various difficulties, temptations, and dangers attending it, they modestly receded, till compelled by the voice of the Church itself and the evident Providence of God. The future exertions of this premature fervour have proved, even when it has been genuine in the main, that no peculiar influence of the SPIRIT OF GOD, but too much of unholy confidence, has generated the equivocal flame. No great and powerful administration has, perhaps, ever been conducted in the Church, which has not had its gradual growth ; when zeal and exertion have been matured by slow but sure experience, and patient observation in the ways of God. The zeal,

which is from heaven, will be patient, humble, modest, and self-denying: meekly submitting to the direction of superior piety, wisdom, and experience; and consonant with the suitable discharge of other acknowledged duties. It will wait with calm expectation, till the providence of God fulfil its most ardent desires, and conduct them forward to their accomplishment. These qualities are the best proofs of its heavenly origin. And such holy zeal will find the guiding hand of God toward its proper destination; his almighty power in its work, and his abundant blessing for its success.

Such is the sacred fervour, which we most devoutly wish, that the Great Head of the Church may inspire into the hearts of many. And could we see it arising among those, who are about to engage in the Sacred Function, it would indeed animate our expectations of success. We might then reasonably hope to meet the various stations of Missionary Labour, which now open before us, with suitable labourers, to the diffusive benefit of mankind, and the salvation of innumerable immortal souls. Such we would most cheerfully receive under the patronage of this Society, and encourage their holy ardour.

“Go forth,” we say, “ye devoted servants of

the Lord, prepared by his SPIRIT, and called by his Providence. Go forth, to bear the name of your Divine Master, the doctrines of his Cross, the blessings of his Salvation, to distant nations. Point out to them their ruin, their guilt, and their misery ; but point them to the all-sufficient remedy of God. Many of them are waiting your message with earnest expectation ; and the HOLY SPIRIT of promise is waiting to put honour on the sacred testimony of Jesus, in the salvation of sinful men. You have the promise of his presence, protection, and blessing. Go forth. Our hearts shall be with you : our funds shall willingly support you : our prayers shall follow you through every labour of love. The eyes of the Church are fixed on you, as her dearest hope : the eyes of holy angels anticipate your success with heavenly joy : the eyes of your Master delight to look on you, for your security and consolation ; and your work shall be its own reward. 'Thousands and tens of thousands, in successive ages, shall reap the benefit of your initiatory labours, in social order, Christian privileges, and immortal hopes. The glorious work shall go forward, progressive to the end of time, softening the miseries of the world, till it be consummated in eternal glory. Then thousands, yet unborn, shall join to bless Him, *who loved them, and redeemed them unto God by his blood* : and to adore

the grace, which inspired your hearts to be the messengers of his love, and made your zeal the happy means of bringing them from the Kingdom of Satan, among the innumerable multitude out of every nation, kindred, and tongue, to surround the Throne of Glory."

The Society at large, united for the purpose of promoting this great object, can only endeavour to prepare the means, provide the resources, adjust the materials, and await, in the patience of hope and the constancy of prayer, the gracious influence, which shall dispose and qualify its appointed messengers, to carry the tidings of peace and salvation to the world. We would be ready, when the prosperous gale of heavenly favour shall begin to breathe, to transmit the treasures of divine knowledge to distant shores, wherever it shall direct the way; to enrich the world with *the unsearchable riches of Christ*.

Though to the actual exercise of Missionary Labour, but few can obtain the honour of admission; yet in this department of the glorious cause, there are few but may find some employment. A department equally necessary, as a part of the grand whole, though by far less honourable than the post of danger, and the field of labour. We sit at home, in the enjoyment of domestic ease,

of social comforts, and of civil privileges ; while, comparatively, but a small portion of our time, our talents, or our exertions will suffice, to aid, by our counsel or our labour, the progress of the Missionary Cause. How much less excusable, then, will be our indifference and supineness, if we do not most cordially unite, with our Brethren, to the utmost of our abilities, as the providence of God shall call, in the management of its important concerns !

Such, indeed, are the increasing views, and the calls for extended operation in this Society, that it begins to claim the decided attention of all who are connected with it. And we trust that all, and each, in their several departments, as its means of exertion and its prospects of usefulness more and more unfold, will begin to feel an increasing interest in its prosperity. A “Summary View of the Designs and Proceedings of the Society,” just published by the Committee, will afford to every attentive reader, such a view of this part of the subject, as will discover the increasing necessity of the combined exertions, and of the united talent and zeal of all its members.

Let those, then, to whom Providence hath granted the opportunity, exert themselves to

increase its patronage. Let them endeavour to engage still further talent, ability, and interest, to aid in prosecuting its opening plans. Then shall the Society be enabled to enter, with reasonable hope of support, on the varied fields of labour which present themselves; provided with sufficient and effective wisdom and energy, under the divine blessing, to attend to the multiplied objects, and to conduct with cheerful assiduity the multiplied departments, in such an extensive, and still extending plan of universal benevolence.

For the same reason as we call on the wise, the powerful, and the active, to communicate their counsel and their aid; we must call also on the affluent to increase the funds of the Institution, by larger and more liberal donations.

There is, perhaps, no species of benevolent design, which requires such ample and liberal support; and it is certain there is none, which so well deserves it. The object before us embraces all that is GREAT and GOOD in time and in eternity; the present welfare and the eternal salvation of the thousand millions of the present race of man, and the thousands of millions which shall succeed in progressive order to the end of time.

However feeble the initiatory efforts of such Institutions, without those initiatory efforts no general effects can ever be expected. However small the beginnings, without those beginnings no grand end can ever be produced. Remember that the silver and the gold are HIS, whose cause we now endeavour to promote. He can augment or diminish your stores, as he pleases. But, in a little time, none of all your treasures will remain with you, but that part of them, which you have thus, in some way or other, put into the treasury of the Lord. Here it will be secured in the remembrance of his loving-kindness, till it be exchanged for the everlasting riches of His Glory !

I cannot persuade myself to urge on you, with any length of argument, those obligations, which, if you possess any love to your Divine Master, if you have any knowledge of his salvation or any experience of his blessings, you will so readily and cheerfully acknowledge. When the cause of GOD—when the cause of HIM whose *grace you know—who though he was rich in all the Names, Attributes, Works, and Worship of JEHOVAH, yet for our sakes became poor*, in all the poverty of the sinful sons of men——when the cause of thousands of millions of our fellow-creatures, in their present welfare and eternal salva-

tion, is the cause which we plead, it would argue a base suspicion of the reality of your Christian profession, if we did not anticipate the utmost exertions of your liberality.

Let me rather compassionate the feelings of those, who, placed in the ranks of humble poverty, though burning with equal zeal to promote the cause of the Redeemer, whom they love, and the welfare of mankind, whom they pity, are compelled to drop the TEAR OF REGRET, instead of the LIBERAL DONATION. Ye cannot communicate pecuniary aid; but, ye poor of the flock, we claim, we solicit, we value your prayers. If they attend the WIDOW'S MITE, we shall receive that mite with peculiar gratification. But, though unattended by any thing but the tear of sympathy to man and of gratitude to God, think not that they are too mean a gift, when conscious that you have no gift beside; for, *the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.* Prayer has often effected more than the combined wisdom, riches, or exertions of the most intelligent or laborious; for it has brought down the divine blessing on those exertions, has secured to them the direction of heavenly wisdom, and has thus conducted them to the consummation which they have so ardently desired. If each then, in his separate department, shall candidly examine,

what the providence of God hath prescribed for him, of influence or of counsel, of labour or of liberality, toward this greatest of all causes, with a sincere desire of complying with the will of his Lord, by cordial co-operation with his Christian Brethren, in the peculiar work which his situation and circumstances require of him, we may hope for effectual exertions, liberal support, and under the divine blessing an enlarged success. The widely extended field of Missionary Labours will soon be diligently occupied, and through the prayer of the Church, we trust, abundantly blessed with heavenly influence; and the time will evidently be drawing nigh, when *Men shall be blessed in HIM, when all nations shall call HIM blessed!*

It only remains now to bring forward

IV. SOME OF THOSE PECULIAR GROUNDS OF HOPE, WHICH MAY ENCOURAGE OUR EXERTIONS IN THE PRESENT TIMES, TO DIFFUSE THE KNOWLEDGE OF CHRISTIANITY THROUGH THE EARTH.

Though I ought to apologize for having detained your attention so long, I cannot dismiss the subject, without offering a few hints on those encouraging circumstances, which in the few last years have opened on us in a manner

the most gratifying, as well as the most uncommon.

Let the point of duty be clearly established ; and, in this alone, the Christian will find his motive and encouragement to action. But, the point of duty, though now plain and self-evident, is by no means the solitary encouragement, in the present time, to the devoted Missionary, or to us.

We might branch forth this part of our subject into a variety of particulars, but two general views will include our purpose—

THE ASPECT OF PROVIDENCES—connected with the TENOUR OF THE PROMISES.

Here a field of observation opens before me, which I most devoutly wish, that I had time or ability to pursue. A right and comprehensive view of these two subjects, would surely remove the remaining indisposition of the Christian World, and rouse to ardour the hitherto too dormant spirit of Missionary zeal. The hopes, which on these grounds we may justly entertain, may well inspire to fortitude, and urge to perseverance. How far, as a Society, we may be favoured in aiding the accomplish-

ment of the great object ; how far, as individuals, our eyes may see the day of universal light and glory ; is known only to him, who sees the end from the beginning. Slow may be its progress : its perfection is sure. And, as yet,

1. The ASPECT OF PROVIDENCES declares its dawn, or rather its approaching lustre—Impediments are yielding—Prejudices are melting away—An unusual fervour of united and holy zeal is kindled—General expectation is excited—And the actual work is begun on the earth.—

Are not these the usual presages of the fulfilment of the divine predictions ?

1. *Impediments are yielding.*

Attempts have been made, and purposes effected, which, a few years ago, would have been deemed chimerical. These attempts, if they have done no more, have at least led to extensive enquiry, and have discovered where Missionary Labours are most necessary, where they would be most welcome, and where the most promising appearances encourage our benevolent hopes. In this enquiry, the East and the West, the North and the South, have opened fields of Missionary Labour unknown before. Various parts of India and Africa are seen actually directing

their eyes to us; or rather let us say, in the language of the Prophetic Psalmist, *stretching out their hands to the Lord*: while the distant Isles are silently waiting for Christian Missionaries to reap the extended harvest.

The once oppressed and desolated coast of Western Africa, so long insulted by the cupidity, enslaved by the cruelty, or degraded through the immoralities of men called Christians, now sees more than a hundred of her children, no longer dreading the insidious snares of the watchful slave-dealer, under the Christian Instruction of the Missionaries of this Society. Most of these are capable of reading those *holy Scriptures, which are able to make them wise unto salvation*. Accustomed to Christian habits and manners, they already join the domestic circle, while reading the word of life, unite in the language of prayer, or lift their infant voices in the praises of their and our Redeemer.

One of these Missionaries is now among you, with one of the sable children of their family, come to bring us the gratifying and encouraging information. He would tell you, if the custom of such a place as this permitted him, that hundreds more of the children of this once injured and oppressed race of men, now wait admission

among them, or would readily be committed to their care, for the purpose of Christian Instruction, in what they call “THE WHITE MAN’S BOOK,” what we call the BOOK OF GOD, the Bible. And such is the laxity of their superstition, that they feel no objection to their becoming Christians, nor any desire afterwards to withdraw them from the profession of Christianity. As many of these are the children of their Chiefs, may we not indulge the pleasing hope of beholding by them the most important changes produced, in the civil state and general manners of the country? Such has been the expectation decidedly expressed by some of the most intelligent observers among themselves; while the Christian hopes, that still more noble purposes will be effected in extending the Kingdom of the Redeemer. How pleasing the prospect,—when, a few years ago, no hope of such beginnings could have been reasonably entertained! But the British Legislature has wisely removed the impediments, by the abolition of the nefarious and destructive Slave Trade; and has thus opened the way for social order, and the light and influence of the glorious Gospel. Five pounds a year is sufficient for the support and education of one of these children—Surely I hear some of you say —“I will increase my intended liberality. I will adopt one or more of this sable race, and commit

them to the care of this Society, and its Christian Teachers—so small a portion of the wealth, which God hath bestowed on me, shall not be withheld to redeem the injuries which Africa has suffered, to train up one or more of her infant race, and to promote the glory of my Redeemer in the welfare of her future sons.”

It is earnestly to be wished, and from the known character and disposition of those, on whom the solemn charge will devolve, it is much to be hoped, that, in another of these regions, much greater facilities will be afforded, than have hitherto existed, for conveying the tidings of salvation, and extending the knowledge of Christianity, among many millions of the human race, now become the subjects and the tenants of the British Empire.

We most candidly and openly profess, that our only present want, is the want of men suited to the purpose, and of funds to support them. The Society dare not urge on any individual the assumption of the Missionary Character. They know that a Missionary must be made of God; disposed by his grace, and sent forth by his providence. But, when such facilities and opportunities are opening in the earth, and when the call of duty must be to some, they would

urge it on the ENQUIRY of every individual, “ IS THAT CALL OF DUTY TO ME?” Let suitable Missionaries occupy the opening stations, and the Society will not indulge a suspicion, but that the liberality of the affluent will keep pace with the providential calls on its expenditure.

2. *Prejudices are melting away.*

Whatever doubts might formerly becloud the mind of the cautious and the timid, when the grand plans now in execution originated, they have already yielded to the force of facts, and the plainest evidence of the divine concurrence. Scarcely a Christian now doubts of the necessity : scarcely a Christian but now acknowledges the duty. Conviction has seized the unwilling; and the unreasonably cautious have cast off their timid prudence, and no longer hesitate to pronounce, *This hath God wrought!* Hence,

3. *An unusual fervour of united and holy zeal has been kindled, among all the denominations of Christians, directed to this one grand object, though in different ways—the Evangelizing of the World.*

The present century has opened with a new era of Christian Light; and, amidst the most

desolating wars, and under the most discouraging aspect of public affairs, has introduced with it, a hitherto unknown impulse of religious union, philanthropy, and zeal. While *judgment hath begun at the house of God*, the degenerated Christian Church; while the heaviest calamities have afflicted and oppressed the nations; while the oldest empires have been plucked from their very roots; amidst the general confusion has sprung up the Tree of Life, to spread its shade and to scatter its fruits over all the earth. While the darkest clouds have overspread the political horizon, through the solemn gloom has shot forth a ray of celestial light, presaging the dawn of that day, which shall *fill the whole earth with the glory of the Lord*.

The first motion of that religious fervour which, in an unusual manner, has marked the character of the present times, originated, as I apprehend, with the formation of Sunday Schools. The general attention to the diffusion of Christian Knowledge among ourselves, which was thus excited, naturally led the mind forward to further plans of extended benevolence. This, perhaps, though by a secret and unperceived influence, gave rise to various societies for the promoting of religion; while the same holy ardour, directing its views still further over the

face of the earth, originated different associations for the conversion of the heathen world.—A blaze of zeal, so sudden and so violent, could scarcely be expected to be permanent and effective. Watched, however, by the jealousy of its enemies, and suspected by the prudence of its friends, the holy impulse, instead of subsiding, as its enemies predicted, and as its friends had reason to apprehend, has progressively increased; and has exceeded in its effects the warmest expectations of its patrons, and deceived the willing forebodings of its adversaries. The Missionary Influence has spread with rapid progress through the earth, wherever the Christian Name is known. In Europe, in Asia, and in America, the same interest in the Missionary Cause has been excited, the bright example imitated, and similar exertions made—exertions, energetic when considered in the abstract, but feeble, indeed, in comparison of the many and increasing calls for Missionary Labour which now surround us.

The Society, for which I plead, has thought it best to pursue the same cause, in its own department, and in a distinct association: not from any hostile views to any other, but from a conviction, that the division of labour will facilitate the work, and bring into operation a mass of influence, the force of which could not other-

wise have been brought to bear on the same great object. We would pursue that object, in the way most agreeable to our views of scriptural discipline and worship; while we extend our individual assistance, our kindest sympathy, and our ardent prayers for success, to every similar undertaking, for the honour of our common Lord, and the salvation of our fellow-men.

Allow me here to turn aside, for a few moments, to admire the conduct and the wisdom of Divine Providence. It never, perhaps, was designed by the Great Head of the Church, that the PREACHER should be solitary, or the BIBLE be alone. The Bible, without a Preacher, may lie useless, disregarded, and unobserved. A Preacher, without the Bible, can scarcely hope for success. But the devoted Missionary, with the Bible in his hand, in the language of those whom he addresses, may, from the evidence of truth, and the influence of the SPIRIT, hope for an abundant harvest of converts to his Lord, *more than the dew drops of the morning*. Amidst the general and novel zeal, therefore, which has been excited for the interest of Christianity through the earth, the heavenly design of translating the Word of Life, and sending its sacred volume through all nations, people, and tongues, has occupied, in an uncommon and surprising

manner, the various denominations of the Christian Church, in this highly-favoured land.

Like the Prophet's cloud, small in its beginning, it hath already spread itself over many countries; and is still proceeding in its benign and generous course; dropping, as it passes, the fertilizing showers of heavenly doctrine. Like Ezekiel's waters, it has issued from the Sanctuary; and, gathering strength as it flows, has already become *a river to swim in*; and promises to diffuse itself into an ocean, unbounded but with the limits of the universal world. Like Daniel's *stone cut out without hands*, as unobserved in its origin, it has in the same manner diffused itself through the earth, to carry with it, the government of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

Since such a grand design could never be executed, but by the union of Christians of every denomination, such a union, in a manner unprecedented and unexpected, has been so cordially adopted, as to astonish the Christian World itself. To expect unanimity in points of either doctrine or discipline, would betray a great ignorance of the present state of human nature. And, without such unanimity, to amalgamate all parties into one mass, would not be union but

confusion. But surely we may, we ought, as Christians, to unite in this one great point, in which our common Christianity unites: we may, we ought to co-operate in this one great object, which is the common and the equal aim of all true Christians; and, when we unhappily divide, in circumstances of discipline or observances, to maintain *the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace*.

This allusion to the British and Foreign Bible Society, will not, I trust, be deemed unsuitable to our present design: since its plans and its success are so essential to the prosperity of every Missionary Undertaking, that its foreign operations have met with commendation, even from those who have wished to check its domestic exertions; and the manifest blessing of Almighty God on its attempts has, together with other circumstances of providential dispensation, raised

4. *That unusual and general expectation, to which we before referred, in the Church at large, of the approaching diffusion of Christian Light, and the influence of Christian Principles through the earth.*

It may here be remarked, that this has generally been the method of Divine Providence, when about to accomplish some great event. The excited expectation of the Church, has excited

its more ardent prayer; and the prayer of faith has been answered with the expected blessing.

If, in the present times, we are deceived in our expectations, we are deceived by the most encouraging appearances, and by prospects of the most imposing nature. We might humbly ask, "Can it be the purpose of God, to raise such a spirit of Christian enterprize and ardour, when he has no corresponding object to accomplish? Can it be his design, to excite such holy expectations, in order to disappoint and to deceive them? On the contrary, the tenour of the divine dispensations, in former times, encourages the holy wishes and hopes of his Church: and excites a confidence, that his Providence is preparing a way for the progress of his Gospel; for the consummation of his Prophecies; and for the fulfilment of his Promises. But,

5. The work is actually begun.

The morning star has arisen, the precursor of the rising sun.

The "Society for promoting Christian Knowledge," the parent of missions in this country, has indeed long been labouring with considerable success in the Missionary Cause; and has employed men, whose memory will ever be held

in admiration in the Christian World—men, who, by their zeal, their piety, and their perseverance, have laid the foundation of evangelizing the East; and have begun a work, which we pray God to conduct to its consummation, by men like themselves! The pious and patient Moravian has long pursued his quiet and undeviating course, to diffuse the light of divine truth, through the darkest corners of the North and of the South. Other Societies, in their own peculiar spheres, have followed the example, with a common share in the divine blessing.

But, it must be acknowledged, that it has been left to the beginning of the present century—a time, which may, perhaps through all future ages, mark a most distinguished era in the Christian Church—to rouse the general ardour of Christian Philanthropy, and to unite the various denominations of Christians in this work of the Lord. God has evidently given his blessing to their varied exertions: and seems thus to intimate to us, how little regard he pays to our so cherished distinctions; while he calls us to a closer union of brotherly love and charity.

I venerate the Episcopal Church of the United Empire. I glory to belong to its communion. I conceive it to be more conformable, in its fun-

damental constitution, to apostolic order and the primitive discipline of the Church, than any other. I wish most cordially to promote its peculiar success; convinced that a universal adherence to its doctrines, a holy use of its primitive and devotional liturgy, and a mild exercise of its discipline, would tend most to the glory of the Redeemer, and the welfare of men. Without any controversy, in former times, the Episcopal Church of England shone forth as a praise in all the earth; and may thus, if she please, maintain her superiority, continue her holy dignity, and rise to more extended usefulness. But is it necessary to unchristianize other churches, to exalt our own? Where GOD is SEEN to work, WE would not dare to oppose. If others ARE casting out devils in the name of Christ, we would not venture to forbid them, because they follow not with us. If it please HIM, who doeth what seemeth good to him in heaven and in earth, to give a part of his work, in evangelizing the world, into the hands of other denominations of Christians, we would not be found among those, who dispute his sovereignty, or who murmur at his appointment. Rather let us excite one another to holy ardour, to pious emulation, and to increased exertions. If former attempts, have failed through jealousy and disunion; let us try what attempts, conducted in the union of the Spirit, will effect.

If old methods have been found inadequate; let us seek after new methods, which may appear to promise success, provided only that they be prudent, legitimate, and wise. Let every one, in his own department, as thus most effectually securing the most extended influence, pursue that work of benevolence toward his fellow-sinners, in which the most diligent pursuit and the utmost exertion of ability, will still leave much to be desired, and much to be done, by all. Thus, co-operating in the work of the Lord, we may well commit the interest of our own particular churches to the protection of Him, who will never fail his people. Are we persuaded in our own minds, that our particular churches are formed on principles most suited to his appointment? then we may be confident, that, in such proportion, they will meet with his peculiar favour and protection; and therefore cannot fail, in an equal proportion, of security and success. Shall the devout lover of the interest of the Redeemer wish for more?

Nor let us be discouraged, if some of our most promising undertakings should fail of the success, which we prematurely anticipated. Our designs may be disappointed, but not HIS. While various objects and fields of labour, are opening in his providence, it is ours to purpose, to ar-

range, and to act, in humble dependance on his all-disposing wisdom. *In the morning let us sow the seed, and in the evening withhold not our hand ; for we know not which shall prosper, either this or that, or whether both shall be alike good.* Let the patience of faith and the perseverance of hope, endure through every discouragement, for the end cannot be disappointed, since it is secured by

II. The faithful PROMISES of God. The nations shall be given to the Son. The heathen shall be his inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth his possession. *The North shall give up, the South shall not keep back. They shall come from the East and from the West. And the Isles shall wait for his Law.* Then shall He be *the light of the Gentiles*, and God's *salvation to the ends of the earth.*—When the providence of God shall hasten to accomplish these prophetic declarations, then, *Who art thou, O great mountain ? before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain.* Then, though comparatively little the powers, feeble the instruments, and inadequate the exertions, the means which HE chooses to employ, however insufficient, shall become effective. *Not by MIGHT nor by POWER, but by my SPIRIT, saith the Lord of Hosts.* Then, shall *the tabernacle of David, which hath been thrown down, be again erected ;*

and the return of the houses of Israel and of Judah, from their long apostacy and dispersion, unite with *the fulness of the Gentiles*. Then, *the glory of the Lord shall cover the earth, as the waters do the seas*. We hail, O God of Israel, the gleams of light, which have shot through the impenetrable darkness, so long surrounding thy ancient people. We trust, that the illustrious morning shall soon break forth, and spread itself over the tops of the mountains. Hasten it, O Lord, hasten it in its time !

On this view of our subject, scripture authorities would be endless. We know that we are engaged in a work of love, which concurs with the PROMISES of God, is encouraged by the present aspect of his PROVIDENCES, to which all the PROPHECIES relate, and in which all his Prophecies, Providences, and Promises shall be consummated. We are convinced that the blessing and the power are HIS. But human instruments are doubtless the means, which he will employ, to accomplish his designs. Let us then follow the path, as his providence opens it before us. Though moving slowly onward, through various impediments and frequently-disappointed expectations, we may be confident, that, in our humble sphere, we are carrying forward the grand plan, toward its final consummation.

Ye venerable Societies, which led the way to Missionary Labour, long before the Christian World in general felt its importance or awoke to exertion, GO FORWARD! and may the Great Head of his Church furnish you with many more labourers, such as the apostolic SCHWARTZ, the laborious GERICKE, and others their faithful associates in the Missionary Vineyard. We follow you, not as rivals, but as co-adjutors. May our Heavenly Master raise up both for you and for us Missionaries, of like piety, zeal, labour, and patient perseverance with theirs! May men of the same spirit, be every where sent forth by the Lord of the Harvest, and crowned with still greater success!

Ye various Associations of Christians, whose zeal for the honour of your Divine Master, whose love to his person and his cause, and whose pity to your fellow-sinners, have excited your attention to the noble object of evangelizing the world, we wish you success in the name of the Lord. GO FORWARD! and the Lord abundantly prosper your exertions.—Our united cause is glorious—its consummation is sure! The darkened nations shall behold the light of life. The impurity and cruelties of their varied superstitions shall yield to the purity and felicity of Gospel truth and grace. Thousands and tens

of thousands, yea millions of immortal spirits, shall be snatched *from the Kingdom of Satan, and translated into the Kingdom of God's dear SON.* The Kingdom shall be the Lord's. All shall know Him. His peace shall be diffused through earth; and His glory be extended eternally above the heavens!

The Plant of Renown planted by his providence and his SPIRIT, perhaps by our hands, shall rise into the *Tree of Life*, shall spread its shade for protection over all the earth, and produce its continual fruits of abundant blessings, while its very leaves shall be for the healing of the nations. Innumerable multitudes yet unborn, shall sit beneath its shade, shall enjoy on earth its fruits of salvation, till it spread its everlasting glory over the Church, transplanted, with it, into the paradise of God above!

GLORIOUS IMMANUEL! our *Almighty Saviour!* and the *Prince of Peace!* thy Church waits, amidst all its discouragements, and through all thy providential delays, the fulfilment of thy promise:—it looks with longing expectation:—it hails with delight the providential intimations of the dawning of that day, when *Men shall be blessed in THEE; when all nations shall call THEE blessed!!* Amen and Amen.





